

THE LIFE OF AUGUSTIN DALY

THE LIFE  
OF  
AUGUSTIN DALY

BY  
JOSEPH FRANCIS DALY

New York  
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY  
1917

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TO ALL LOVERS OF THE STAGE  
AND ITS TRADITIONS  
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FIRST PERIOD: 1838-1869

## PREFACE

No apology is needed for giving an account of the man who lifted the American stage from a very low estate to a position of great dignity, and gave the dramatic art of his own country a first place in two continents; and who did all his life work with such courage in the face of obstacles and such steadfastness in pursuit of a single purpose, that the history of his career must give heart to every self-reliant, intelligent striver in every business of life.

## FOREWORD

WHEN Joseph Francis Daly died in August, 1916, he left complete the manuscript of this book, on which he had been working for years. The fact that he did not live to revise the proofs may have resulted in errors, although great pains have been taken to avoid them, and it is believed that they will be few and unimportant. The photographs used as illustrations were in almost every case set aside by the author for the purpose; his own portrait is, of course, an exception, having been inserted as part of a record that includes many phases of his own as well as of his brother's life.

# THE LIFE OF AUGUSTIN DALY

## CHAPTER I

Family Romance. A young Kerry girl and her lover. Separation. Elopement. Married into the army. A widow with one child captured by the French. The child saved from the sea. Kindness of the French. Arrival at Jamaica. The buried city of Port Royal. Montego Bay. The lovers reunited. Their daughter Elizabeth. Life in the West Indies. An adventurous young Quaker. Travelling theatricals. John Bernard and William Rufus Blake. Negro insurrection. Punishment of slaves. Elizabeth's intercession. Social traits. Emigration to the United States. Efforts to embark. Twice retarded. Arrival of Captain Daly. To New York in his vessel. Marriage of Elizabeth. Denis Daly's family and character. Settles in Plymouth, North Carolina. Augustin Daly born. The last voyage. Hurried journey. The sailor's grave. His estate in North Carolina "administered" to death. Removal to Norfolk, Virginia. The boys see their first play. Murdock and Miss Russell, afterwards Mrs. Hoey. Dick Turpin surpasses Macbeth. Removal to New York.

WHETHER Augustin Daly's gift for the dramatic art was inherited can never be known. There was a Richard Daly, a Dublin manager noted for his skill in discovering and training talent for the stage; and there was a John Daly, a dramatist of Dublin, one or two of whose works survive; but no connection with these individuals can be traced. Augustin Daly's father was a sailor, one grandfather a soldier, and the other a farmer.

A young Kerry girl, Margaret Moriarty, born in 1781 of a well-known family of Tralee, fell in love at the age



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AUGUSTIN DALY



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of sixteen with John Duffey of Carlow, older than herself by several years and destined, it is said, by his family for the Church. They were separated; and in girlish desperation Margaret ran away, married into the army, and was left a young widow with one child, in Gibraltar. Sailing for home, they were captured by the French in the Bay of Biscay. In transferring the prisoners from their vessel to one of the French fleet the little daughter Catherine fell into the sea, but was rescued by a sailor and taken to another vessel. The French (who, my grandmother was particular to say, were uniformly kind in the treatment of their prisoners) exerted themselves to trace the lost child and restore it to its mother. An exchange of prisoners that afterwards took place brought the young widow and the family of General Darby together, and she was taken to Jamaica, the principal island of the British West Indies.

They landed at Port Royal or Kingston and crossed over the mountains to Falmouth and Montego Bay on the north coast, a part singularly free from the visitations of earthquake which have caused such destruction in and about Kingston. At the time Margaret entered that harbor, over a hundred years ago, she could discern beneath its waters the houses of old Port Royal which had been overwhelmed by a former convulsion.

The first Sunday after her arrival in Montego Bay Margaret went to church followed by a negro lad, bearing, as was customary, her kneeling cushion. She had to slip off her shoe, which was naturally a size smaller than it ought to be. This shoe she carefully concealed by a fold of her dress; but when she was about to rise from her knees, it had disappeared. A glance behind showed the solitary but conspicuous figure of an officer in uniform who was

he had managed to abstract with his cane. Filled with indignation, the lady's flashing eyes looked the audacious culprit full in the face and recognized the lover of her girlhood! They walked homeward together and exchanged the stories of their long separation. He was a widower and had with him two little girls younger than her daughter Catherine. His wife had been a Quakeress and had borne him a large family, of whom Sarah, born in Guernsey, and Mary Ann, born in Cavan, survived.

The marriage of the long-separated lovers took place in Montego Bay in June, 1811. Their happiness was to be short-lived, however, and Margaret was soon to be widowed once more, and this time with added responsibilities. Lieutenant Duffey died on September 30, 1811, of a fever common to the tropics. Six months after his death was born the child of this union, Elizabeth, the mother of Augustin Daly.

The principal relic of John Duffey preserved by his descendants is his first commission, signed by George III and dated November 19, 1800, making him ensign in a regiment of Fencibles.

Margaret Duffey, now thirty-one years old, a woman of indomitable spirit, set herself to the task of rearing this young brood so strangely brought to her nest. She was small and slender, with beauty of the Irish type, — fair skin, black hair, and dark gray eyes. Elizabeth, her youngest child, passed a happy girlhood in one of the most beautiful isles of the tropics. Two of her half-sisters were soon married — Catherine to William Finchette and Mary Ann to John H. Woodgate, both of good families from England. Woodgate, of Quaker stock, was an adventurous youth who had left England to seek his fortune in America, and after every variety of adventure finally reached New Orleans in time to hire as a deck-hand on

a sloop bound for Montego Bay, where his older brother had settled some years before. John was reduced on landing to the simple outfit of trousers and shirt, and when his brother Edward, advised of his arrival, cantered down to the dock on his chestnut horse, he beheld a prodigal in appearance if not in repentance. He took the youth home and set him up in business, and in an incredibly brief space John was the owner of the handsomest residence in the town.

West Indian society was then enjoying its best days. The theatre was a favorite recreation, not to be indulged in, however, except when travelling companies from England crossed the mountains. They were hospitably entertained by the residents. Among those actors who visited the Duffeys were John Bernard (author of a book of memoirs) and William Rufus Blake, afterwards a favorite in New York. As we remember him he was immensely corpulent — but in the Jamaica days he was “the slimmest and gracefullest” of light-comedy juveniles.

The fatal negro insurrection occurred in Elizabeth's girlhood. It was due to the fact that the anti-slavery agitation in the mother country, which led to the abolition of the merciless slave trade, was not followed by emancipation in the colonies. The traffic in slaves had brought to Jamaica in less than a century over six hundred thousand blacks. Their condition varied with circumstances. The coal-black African cultivated the fields, or worked at trades or as a day laborer. His descendants of various colors were usually domestic servants. Slaves were hired, and had to be returned in good condition by the lessees at the end of the term. For negligence or obstinacy men and women were sent by their employers to the jail to be whipped, private punishment not being permitted. Many of the poor creatures

who knew the kind heart of Elizabeth, stopped on the way to punishment to implore her intercession, and the young girl was always ready to put on her hat and go to the offended master or mistress upon those errands of mercy. She was never unsuccessful. It was not always an easy task. Some of the slaves were chronic insubordinates, for whom it required much tact to plead.

Another phase of racial life in the island was presented by the free women of color, the children of planters, manumitted by their fathers and left in many instances with considerable means. They were often sent abroad for accomplishments which they could use if need were for their support. Many of them were hardly to be distinguished from white. Some formed voluntary connections with wealthy bachelors; but many were distinguished for high principles and strict morality, and those with means often developed fine traits of benevolence in emulation of the white ladies of the colony. The latter formed a community of high-minded and strict-living people.

The changed conditions that resulted from the emancipation of the slaves (which followed the insurrection) drove many business men to the United States, — among them Mr. Woodgate. He brought with him Thomas, a boy of pure African descent, born of slaves. Mrs. Woodgate was no sooner settled in New York than she wrote to her stepmother, pressing her to come with Elizabeth and a granddaughter Margaret, child of the Finchettes, who were dead. Death had severed nearly every other tie on the island. These bereavements inclined Mrs. Duffey to join the Woodgates in New York. Twice was passage engaged in vessels touching at Montego Bay, and each time an accident prevented their sailing. It was then late in the season, and the hope of passage by

another vessel was given up. The brig *Victor*, however, commanded by Captain Denis Daly, unexpectedly arrived at Falmouth. Elizabeth was visiting friends there when Captain Daly called and met her. He wrote immediately to Mrs. Duffey that he would stop with his vessel for her at Montego Bay. No accident now prevented the embarking, and the family was brought to New York. There the marriage of Elizabeth and Captain Daly took place at the Woodgates' house in Grand Street, near Essex, on July 31, 1834.

Captain Daly was born near Limerick, Ireland, in 1797. His father Michael Daly, who was what was called a gentleman farmer, gave his children a good education and procured for Denis at an early age the place of purser's clerk in the British navy. This determined the young man's career, and when he shortly after resigned from that post and received his portion from his father, he came to America, invested his means in building the *Victor*, and commenced trade on the American coast and in the West Indies. He is described as tall and of powerful physique. His adventurous disposition and fearlessness were inherited to the full by my brother, who was one of the most physically courageous men I ever knew.

Immediately after the wedding the bride sailed with her husband for the West Indies. On their way back her illness compelled them to put in to Norfolk. Not long afterwards the *Victor* was lost in shipwreck, uninsured, and was replaced by the brig *William*. In 1838 Captain Daly established himself in the lumber business at Plymouth, North Carolina, acquiring the Armistead property, consisting of residence, warehouse, and wharf. There his elder son Augustin was born on July 20, 1838, a sister (who died young) having been born in Norfolk in 1836.

other sailing masters; but in September, 1841, when the *Union* was ready for sea with a cargo, her commander fell ill, and Captain Daly, not to delay her sailing, took up his old station on the quarter-deck. Our mother never forgot his leaving home. He had the sailor's superstition about formal leave-takings, and she watched him walk up and down with his younger son in his arms, lay him in his cradle, and softly leave the house. Three weeks later a letter arrived telling of his death. It came from Captain Pike, of Ocracoke, a small settlement at the inlet of the same name, south of Cape Hatteras and situated upon the long sandy breastwork which forms the Atlantic coast of North Carolina, and separates the waste of ocean from the inner waters known as Pamlico and Albemarle sounds. When detained by adverse winds or calms, quite a fleet of outward-bound vessels collects at the inlet. The coast had an evil reputation for wreckers, and many stories were told of vessels lured on the breakers by false lights fastened to horses which were led up and down the sands.

Upon receipt of the distressing communication our mother hastily left for Ocracoke, taking with her a captain and two seamen for the *Union*, as she was advised would be necessary. She set out with her infant son and a nurse, by coach, at four in the morning, for Little Washington on Pamlico Sound, found a sloop ready to sail to Ocracoke, and reached it the same day. Captain Pike and his wife showed her every attention and gave her full particulars of all that had taken place. It was owing to light winds and calms that Captain Daly was three weeks in reaching Ocracoke from Plymouth. When his vessel arrived at the inlet he was found prostrated with fever, and was taken ashore. Doctor Dudley of Portsmouth, twelve miles distant, was sent for, but could not

save him. He was interred in a plot set apart for burials in Captain Pike's garden. The ravages of wind and wave have devoured the shore line and buried the little cemetery beneath the waters of the Sound.

Our mother returned to Plymouth, tried to put her husband's affairs in shape, and then removed to Norfolk. The administration in Plymouth was very disappointing, and the disheartened widow conceived a distaste for the law that well-nigh prevented, in after years, my entering that worthy profession. Augustin and I were placed at school with a pedagogue of English extraction and formidable aspect, one John Primrose Scott, who had married an old friend of my mother.

One of the important structures in Norfolk was the Avon Theatre, visited by all the first-rate travelling companies. There my brother and I saw our first theatrical performance. Of theatres we had never heard until a friend came over from Portsmouth with tickets for the play. Both boys were then away from home in different parts of the town and were hastily sent for. I was the only one reached in time, and great was the outcry of the elder at his disappointment when he got home just as we were setting out — myself, aged seven, in all the elegance of a white tunic and trousers, with a shiny black belt, and a bouquet in hand. I endeavored to comfort him with the philosophy usually applied on such occasions, but he only howled the louder and secluded himself in a closet. When we returned, grandmother described with much pride how resigned he at last became, and how he went to bed very quietly. He was warmly praised. Within a week it became his turn to go to the play and mine sadly to apply the philosophy. I expected to hear next morning that I had gone to bed quietly and resignedly too. No such statement was forthcoming, and I was



tured to present the fact myself, but without attracting notice.

Augustin and I next day fell to comparing notes on the marvels we had witnessed. I had seen "Macbeth" with James E. Murdoch and Mrs. Russell (afterwards Mrs. John Hoey) in the leading parts. Augustin had seen "Rookwood," with Murdoch as the dashing highwayman *Dick Turpin*, and his vivid description of that thrilling adaptation of Ainsworth's novel convinced me that he had had the best of it; for all that I distinctly remembered of my play was Lady Macbeth in a nightgown with a chamber candlestick, beckoning the audience "to bed" — a recommendation too suggestive to be relished by a small boy sitting up for the first time. His experience aroused in Augustin at once the spirit of the theatre. He devised performances in our woodhouse, to the satisfaction of our small neighbors.

It was a year after this that our Aunt Woodgate succeeded in persuading her sister Elizabeth to come to New York with her family. "You must feel, Betsy," she wrote, "that this city is the only place for a widow, with boys who have to make their way in the world!"

## CHAPTER II

Public school pupil. Enlists for the battle of life. Night school. Amateur dramatic societies. Some well-known members. Location of these little theatres. Maternal solicitude and precaution. Augustin not an actor. A boyish Julius Cæsar. Scene-painting doubled with Mark Antony. Low condition of New York play-houses. Vile upper tiers. The stage and the actors. Talented drunkards. A boy's experience. Fourth of July. The Bowery pit. Junius Brutus Booth in "Richard III" drives Richmond off Bosworth Field. The Astor Place riot. "Ned Buntline" and his sentence. A childish witness of the fray. Forrest on Macready. Respect for the drama in New York. Theatres provincial. All but two keep actors in stock to support stars. The Daly boys are taken to the theatre. The six theatres of the metropolis. Barnum and his lecture room. His ups and downs. A little game of "human wreck." Bills of the play and what they contained. Adah Isaac Menken. The Ravels. The Revolutionary drama. Enchantment of Castle Garden.

AUGUSTIN attended for a brief season the public school in Broome Street, New York, presided over by the late James Dewitt — one of the first schools organized under the new department of education, the successor of the old Public School Society. Among his schoolmates was John H. V. Arnold, afterwards Surrogate of New York, and a great collector of works on the drama and early New York history. Our mother, with firm independence, would accept no aid from her relatives in rearing her children, and in order to add to her diminishing resources took special lessons in sewing in order to earn money to keep her sons at school. Augustin was, however, anxious to begin the battle of life. He became clerk in one concern after another, and attended night school as well.

At this period the theatrical inclinations of the youth of New York found encouragement in amateur societies, usually named after celebrated actors, which gave performances in little theatres in the upper stories of commercial buildings. The "Murdoch Association" met in Crosby Street; the "Burton" in a room near the theatre in Chambers Street; and the "John R. Scott Association" usually performed in Humor Hall, a third-story opera-house in Houston Street fitted up by German amateurs.

These associations were nurseries which graduated many celebrities. F. F. Mackay belonged to the "Murdoch." It was the rule of these societies that each member was to have his night, for which he was to choose his own play and his own part in it and be loyally supported by his associates. When young Mackay had his night, he was supported by George C. Boniface, William J. Florence, and Maggie Mitchell, — all stars in later years.

Towards one or more of these amateur societies did Augustin naturally incline, greatly to the distress of our dear mother, who always required me to go with him and supply the companionship needed in boyhood. Hence we were constantly together at night, went everywhere, and saw pretty much everything. His joining the dramatic associations was not, I can testify, due to any wish of appearing on the stage. It was owing, I can see now, to a haunting desire to become familiar with management. He was absolutely without ambition to act. I do not recall his ever playing a part except twice, once to be mentioned in the next chapter, and once in a small literary society when he took the part of *Julius Cæsar*. He managed the production, and set me to work to paint the scenery, which I cheerfully undertook without any previous experience. To be sure he also cast ma-

for the responsible part of *Mark Antony*, but I know that in his opinion my success was on that occasion achieved as scenic artist. As for his impersonation of *Julius Cæsar*, I think that with his classic robes and his strikingly handsome features, a more agreeable boyish figure was never seen upon any stage.

The dread of contamination from too close association with things theatrical, which my mother in common with many other good people felt in that day, was excusable for more than one reason. Theatrical management was then precarious, and places of amusement were open to grave objections. The playhouse deserved the hard things that were said about it. In every theatre there was an upper tier with a bar, where strong drinks were supplied and (in some houses) where the profligate of both sexes resorted. To be sure there was no necessity for the patrons of the family circle or the boxes to come in contact with such visitors, as the bad company was confined to the upper and cheaper parts of the house, — the “shilling gallery,” admission to which was twelve and a half cents (there was a coin of that value in those days); but it was natural to fear that to that part of the house young men bent upon seeing life would be tempted, for access to it was open.

The actor shared the uncertainties of the manager; salaries were small and sometimes irregular. And the player too often was more convivial than ambitious. After the performance he resorted to taverns and coffee-houses (all well known and respectable enough) and entertained the patrons of the theatre (all well known and respected too), and there until the early hours he discussed the glories of the stage and many tobies of strong alc. He was not then the conservative and prosperous capitalist that he is to-day. Several scenes combining the

his self-respect, and it was not increased by the public sentiment which condoned his failings, and tolerated the upper circle of the playhouse with its bar. It was the day of the "talented drunkard," the ban of managers and the cause of annoyance and disappointment to the public. It was owing to the impression made upon my brother's mind by the conditions existing in his youth that he instituted reforms in every direction when he opened his first theatre. Led by his forceful spirit, a succession of laudable followers helped to preserve his standards for the playhouse and the profession.

Judge Charles P. Daly used to relate an experience of his own when Junius Brutus Booth was in his prime, and any announcement of his engagement drew crowds willing to risk the possibility of disappointment from his well-known convivial habits. It was a Fourth of July, and Charles had saved up his pocket money for fire-crackers, gunpowder, and a pit ticket for the Bowery to see the great Booth as *Richard III*. The gunpowder and crackers, alas! were wasted; for when he awoke, as he thought, at daybreak, and hurried to the Hoboken Ferry to take the boat for the general holiday resort, the Elysian Fields, he saw to his astonishment crowds returning instead of going, and found that he had waked in the evening instead of the morning twilight! But the glories of the night were still to be enjoyed, and he hastened back to the theatre, where the doors were to be opened at half past six and the performance was to commence at seven, according to the early habits of those days. To his dismay the pit was already packed with men standing several deep at the back and preventing the least view of the stage by a late comer, especially a small boy. Observing his predicament, however, the good-natured men in front of him lifted him over their heads

and passed him along from hand to hand to the patrons of the crowded front rows, who then deposited him on the stage. This expedient was soon followed with the remaining small boys in the pit, and they were all safely huddled in corners of the "float," a space which in those days projected several feet in front of the curtain. Here the youngsters watched the malignant, crook-backed tyrant dispose of the rival Plantagenets, order Buckingham to execution, and ultimately, in defiance of history, chase *Richmond* off the field — for it happened to be one of those occasions when Booth was more than ordinarily full of inspiration. The luckless *Richmond* on that night was actually pursued down the back stairs, out of the back door, and into the street, and finally saved himself by taking refuge in a convenient passage.

The conditions referred to above were not alone what then affected a large part of the community unfavorably towards the theatre. Just before we came to the city occurred the Astor Place Opera House riot, growing out of the partisanship of admirers of the eminent English actor, Macready, and of the popular Edwin Forrest. Newspaper articles on both sides of the Atlantic, injudicious speeches by Macready from the stage, injurious replies published by Forrest, inflammatory articles in a weekly called *Ned Buntline's Own*, written by the publisher, Judson, and, on the occasion of a farewell engagement of Macready at the Opera House, a *canard* that the officers and crew of a British vessel in the harbor were to land for his protection — all this led to a mob marching on the theatre to wreck it, the calling out of the militia, and a fierce encounter in which the soldiers had to fight for their own lives, resulting in the killing of twenty-three persons and the wounding of twenty-two. The ringleader Judson (or

rioters, was indicted, tried, and found guilty. Judson, the instigator of the fray by appeal in his paper to "patriotism," very properly received the utmost punishment for the offence (rioting) for which he was indicted — namely, a year's imprisonment and a fine. To the claims for consideration made in his behalf on the score of his services to his country (he had been formerly in the navy) and of his alleged breeding as a gentleman and a scholar, the district attorney, John McKeon, retorted that whatever he had once been, he was now one of the proprietors "of a vile newspaper — a beast of prey hanging on the great camp of humanity and living on the carrion of blasted character and vice." It was significantly observed also that whereas all the other prisoners had offered proof of previous good character in mitigation of their offence, Judson did not venture to do so.

F. F. Mackay, then a boy, was on the north side of Astor Place with a young friend who had come with him, as boys will, to see the row. When the firing began, a man standing by them exclaimed, "That's no blank cartridge," and seizing little Mackay, tossed him over the railing and into the area below. When Mackay got out again, he found that his boy companion had been shot. Mackay years afterwards frequently supported Forrest in star engagements. When Forrest last played in Boston, a chair was placed in the wings to save him the fatigue of going to his dressing-room after each scene. He used to make Mackay sit with him, and one night the latter told him of the news from England that Macready was dead. Forrest uttered an exclamation and raised his hands and eyes, then said in a strong voice: "The greatest artist of them all! In ten years there will be no one to read Shakespeare!" Mackay suggested that there remained Phelps, then a deserved favorite of the London audience.

"Phelps is an old man," answered Forrest, and repeated, "In ten years there will be no one to read Shakespeare!"

Respect for the drama in civilized communities is too deeply seated to be destroyed by adventitious circumstances. The theatre was a favorite recreation with the most intelligent circles of New York. But the city was then served somewhat like an English provincial town. Its theatres, with two exceptions, were maintained for the accommodation of travelling stars who appeared season after season with the regularity of the winter constellations. For their convenience stock companies were maintained like stock scenery. Burton's and Wallack's were the exceptions.

Our good Aunt and Uncle Woodgate were fond of the theatre and took us there often. Besides Burton's<sup>1</sup> and Wallack's,<sup>2</sup> there were Niblo's,<sup>3</sup> the Broadway,<sup>4</sup> the Bowery,<sup>5</sup> and the National.<sup>6</sup> In these places the ballet was modestly clothed and the only "problem" play was the antiquated "Stranger." There was one place to which small boys and girls were allowed to go as matter of course. This was Barnum's Museum,<sup>7</sup> comprising three floors of curiosities, and a "lecture room" fitted up marvellously like a theatre, but to which persons having a prejudice against playhouses might resort without misgivings. It was a profitable concern, but Barnum happened to back a New England Clock Company too heavily and failed. The story of how he recovered is characteristic. His creditors were visited in turn by a sympathetic friend, leading a human wreck. The human wreck was Barnum. The eloquent friend persuaded the creditors to sign off

<sup>1</sup> Chambers Street.

<sup>2</sup> Near Broome Street.

<sup>3</sup> Near Prince Street.

<sup>4</sup> Near Worth Street.

<sup>5</sup> Still standing.

<sup>6</sup> Chatham Street.







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for fifty cents on the dollar. This accomplished, Barnum — washed, shaved, and faultlessly dressed — presided once more over his museum. One creditor, however, had taken the precaution to add, “on condition that Mr. Barnum will not be able to pay any more.” He got his money.

As Augustin grew in years, his favorite theatres were Wallack’s and Burton’s, where real theatrical companies were maintained, and in which (at Wallack’s, especially) Shakespearian comedy, old plays and new ones were presented with scenery and costumes specially prepared for each revival. Here Daly learned his art.

What bills of the play there were in those days! Such a night’s entertainment is unknown in these degenerate times. A five-act tragedy, then a *pas seul* by a favorite danseuse, perhaps a comic song, and the whole to conclude with a rattling farce or a gorgeous extravaganza; the *pas seul* at the Bowery or the National by Miss Gertrude Dawes amid the shouts of the boys, and at Wallack’s by Miss Malvina Pray, who was soon to become Mrs. W. J. Florence and to dance through a hundred parts, from *Yankee Gal* to *Mrs. Gilflory*. The bills of the play were real bills of the play — none of your latter-day “programmes” with columns of chit-chat and newsy paragraphs edited by a literary person with scissors and paste, or, worse still, the modern abomination of thirty-two pages containing, to the few crumbs of information about the play, an intolerable deal of advertisements. They were good generous bills of the play, a yard long, but known as the “small bills” — to which the public was referred by the advertisements, for “particulars.”

And what freaks of ambition did the bills of the play disclose! A tight-rope dancer (his full name ought to

of *Hamlet*, and, as it appears, for one night only! And Lola Montez, deserting a royal admirer to court the sovereign public, but without a qualification for the stage unless it were notoriety, essaying the rôle of danseuse (she could not dance); then of actress (she could not act) in a play "written expressly for her by Mr. C. P. T. Ware," a poor little hack playwright who wrote anything for anybody — and making a complete failure in all.

And how the inky blackness of the bills of the play is illumined by strange meteors that flashed for their brief moment and were gone! Here is the singular Hebrew star, Adah Isaacs Menken, ambitious to be poet as well as actress, who has left some memories of herself as Mazeppa bound to a trained steed, some accounts of adventures in foreign lands, and a book of verse, "Infelicia," dedicated to Charles Dickens. Here the bills show fairyland — Niblo's Garden with the Ravel pantomimists — and here the Revolutionary drama, a favorite entertainment when our country was young, in which one Yankee easily whipped half a dozen Britishers, and George Washington always appeared with red fire, in a final tableau; and here a real scene of enchantment — the opera at Castle Garden, where the audiences between the acts strolled out on the balconies to watch the moonbeams dance with the waters of the bay.

## CHAPTER III

Theatre in a back yard. First attempt of a dramatist unknown to fame. A boy's paper. First attempt at management in public. The Melville Troupe in Brooklyn. Incidental account of the attempt to establish the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Objections to a curtain. Daly tackles the early Brooklyn public. Home-made poster. Varied entertainment announced. Unselfishness of the confederates. "Costumes by Mr. Harry Seymour." "Music by orchestra of six pieces." Young ladies engaged. Cast of characters. Division of glory. Sefton to be *Toodles*. Troubles of the manager. No money for costumes. Seymour adapts himself to circumstances. German band succumbs. The last quarter. Performance perfect except for one stage wait. *Porter* in "Macbeth" downstairs arguing with the band. *Banquo* as *Porter*. *Macduff's* peril. All's well. The Melville Troupe fulfills its promise to the public. Charles Mathews. Augustin determines to become a journalist.

No sooner did the small boy Augustin feel himself at home in New York than he set up a theatre in the rather confined back yard of our house in Ridge Street. He gathered the admiring urchins of the neighborhood together for his company, and after fitting up the stage and announcing the opening, it suddenly occurred to him that he had no play. "That's all right," spoke up the oldest boy present, "I'll write one." I forget that boy's name — it ought to be remembered because he was one of those who "do things." He called for pen, ink, and paper, which being promptly furnished, together with a barrel head to write upon, he spread the sheet of foolscap and instantly plunged into the throes of composition; we saw with wondering eyes the lines flow from his

## "THE DEBT.

## A Play.

Act I, Scene I. Interior of an inn. Enter Gentleman."

And then he stopped. For what reason he stopped I cannot say, but he never penned another line of that play. He may, in after years, have grown to be a very useful citizen, but I am firmly convinced that we then and there witnessed his whole career as a dramatist.

With Augustin's predilection for the theatre went a fondness for journalism, and he began, with boyish friends of similar proclivities, a weekly story paper in manuscript. J. H. V. Arnold was one of the editors. Each number was to be controlled by a different person, whose production was to be freely criticised in the following issue. Whatever may have been the merits of those productions, there was no question as to the roundness, fulness, and searching quality of the criticisms. It was not a bad beginning for the career of a future dramatic reviewer.

As he grew, his ideas enlarged. Having encouraged his brother to put on paper a farce in one act, "A Bachelor's Wardrobe," an effort wholly original and boyish, an appointment was secured with the great Burton himself, then <sup>1</sup> the manager of the new Metropolitan Theatre.<sup>2</sup> Nothing could exceed the graciousness of the veteran's reception of the youthful visitor. He promised to give the play a reading. It was returned without loss of time, accompanied by a note pointing out its unsuitableness for production, but adding that it evinced a sense of humor that gave promise for the future.

<sup>1</sup> 1856.

Immediately after this, Augustin, mere lad that he was, conceived the incredible idea of hiring a real theatre for one night and giving a genuine public performance. The only real theatre which at that time could be engaged by a manager of limited means — say pocket money to a small amount — was, of all places in the world, in the city of Brooklyn. In the year A.D. 1856 Brooklyn had but one theatre, and that was on the third floor of a building on the corner of Fulton and Orange streets, for Brooklyn was widely known as the City of Churches, and its residents preferred to cross the ferry when they sought recreation of a worldly character. It was not until a year or two after the event which we are about to describe that the best people reluctantly consented to countenance the erection of a playhouse in their serious borough, and even then they compromised by calling it an Academy of Music. Nor was this project completed without strange internal convulsions in the Building Committee, principally over the questions of stage and scenery. When these and foot-lights were conceded to advanced sentiment, a firm stand was made against a curtain. “A curtain,” as I heard one grave citizen argue, “is intended to conceal something, and concealment suggests impropriety.” It was necessary to explain to him that stage plays were usually divided into sections commonly called “acts,” and that the curtain was lowered simply to mark the intervals; also that it was highly advantageous to screen the preparation of the different scenes, and then to display them as a whole by the raising of the curtain. Many instances were adduced and authorities appealed to in substantiation of these arguments, which were ultimately supported by the personal recollections of some of the older inhabitants, — the younger prudently held their peace, — and finally a complete playhouse was established, and the

broken; so that now Brooklyn has become a city of theatres as well as churches, and no harm done.

At the period of destitution when Brooklyn boasted the solitary third-story playhouse first mentioned, the vicinity of that temple of Momus was suddenly irradiated by a gorgeous poster (hand-painted), announcing that "The Melville Troupe of Juvenile Comedians," on their way from Canada to the Southern States, would give a performance for one night only in the city of Brooklyn, and would present a varied bill of attractions commencing with the screaming farce of "Poor Pillicoddy," followed by the second act of Shakespeare's sublime tragedy of "Macbeth"; after which a comic song would be given by Master William Melville, the whole to conclude with the celebrated drama in two acts entitled "Toodles," in which the aforesaid Master William Melville would enact his famous impersonation of *Mr. Toodles*.

Thus was heralded to the world the first effort in public management of the distinguished theatrical director of a later day. The whole scheme was his invention. He was then eighteen, and his confederates, all former school-mates, were mostly younger. He had no money; nobody had any money sufficient to pay the expenses of an undertaking which included rent of theatre and hire of musicians and costumes. With perfect honesty the young manager expected to meet them with the receipts of the performance, which were to be sacredly devoted to the purpose. None of the boy associates was to receive a penny — the glory of acting was to be ample compensation. Not even the attachés in front of the house were to be paid; they were all confederates, and, so far as the doorkeeper and ushers went, were to be rewarded by being permitted to look at the performance. Difficulty, it is true, was experienced



flight down from the auditorium. A compromise, however, was effected with him. After he judged that the demand for tickets had ceased he was to come up and see the play. This he did, and it is highly creditable to the honesty of the people of Brooklyn that no one attempted to effect a surreptitious entrance. A number — not a very great number — of persons, when the doors were opened, did actually pay to come in, but no one attempted to enter without paying. Those who had no intention of paying had no intention of coming.

The costumes for the three plays were engaged from the emporium of Mr. Harry Seymour, a big-hearted ex-actor who kept his establishment in Canal Street. The music was to be furnished by an orchestra of six pieces under a leader, an honest German, found I don't know where. Both these purveyors were to be paid in advance on their appearance at the theatre. It was supposed that the receipts of course would be ample for the purpose, since the music was to cost about ten dollars and the costumes eight; and with rent about twenty-five more, the prospect of a handsome profit was undeniable. This hope satisfied also the young ladies who were engaged for *Lady Macbeth*, *Mrs. Toodles*, and the other female characters of the bill, at a small salary. They were young and ambitious, and were easily found by advertising for ladies desirous of joining a juvenile troupe. What the stage-struck damsels thought when waited upon by the youthful manager and his equally boyish assistants to discuss the terms of the engagement, I do not know; but engage they did with great good-will, and they entered into the spirit of the enterprise, took their chances of getting any salary, and loyally did their best to be Melville sisters and to see the thing through, with a devotion which might

but which, I am sure, was all hearty, womanly, and good.

The rehearsals for this performance were held in a room in the old Gothic Hall on Broadway, opposite the former site of the New York Hospital. The programme was arranged by the manager to give the genius of the young Melvilles ample scope for display. *Macbeth* was to be enacted by Charles Melville (*né* Jacobson, an ambitious, dark-haired lad who afterwards joined Wallack's Company), and, as before stated, Master William Melville (Sefton) was to convulse with his inimitable *Toodles*. He had done it several times at private parties, and it *was* immensely if restrictedly popular. From the very beginning the young manager was to taste all the bitter-sweets of management. Not only did he undertake the engagement of theatre, music, costumes, female stars, and the innumerable other details of his project single-handed, with rehearsals to manage in addition, but he had to encounter insubordination and dissatisfaction in his troupe, one or two young gentlemen throwing up their parts and having to be pursued and placated on street corners.

At length the eventful night saw everything prepared. The auditorium, brilliant with lights, awaited the spectators. These poured in until the total takings at the box-office reached the sum of eleven dollars and seventy-five cents. This, with all the Melville family's private resources, was immediately turned over to the landlord, who had the first claim and whose payment left in the managerial pocket a surplus of twenty-five cents. When Seymour arrived in the green room (on the lower floor) with a huge trunk of costumes, he was compelled to listen to excuses. His first impulse was to sit on the lid of his trunk, and his next to depart with his goods. Ultimately, finding himself confronted by a condition not perhaps unfamiliar to an old actor, and recalling his own golden days

he relented, opened his treasures, and soon had the Melville Troupe arrayed in their stage finery.

This ordeal gone through, worse remained. The German band arrived and filled the passage with their portly forms and instruments, and waited, as was their custom, for their leader to announce that the pecuniary obligations of the management had been met. The animated colloquy (unaccompanied by any show of money) which took place between the high contracting parties soon, however, excited fears not perhaps foreign to their stolid breasts. The dilemma of the Melvilles was imparted to them by their leader, who, after a short conference with them, announced their decision to return home, and their simple request that at least the cost of their passage back over the ferry might be forthcoming. The disconsolate manager, with a rapid mental calculation as to the expense of transporting eight Germans at three cents apiece, produced his solitary remaining quarter. The leader took it, looked at it with fine disdain, and then without another word sent it ringing down the corridor. Another conference with his band followed, and he then announced that if the management would pledge itself to turn over to them everything thereafter received at the doors, they would go on. Gladly giving this assurance, the manager joyfully beheld them unpack, tune up, ascend the stairs to the orchestra, and soon after burst into a melodious overture as advertised in the bills.

The plays were a huge success, with trifling accidents not worth mentioning in estimating the performance as a whole. The company, oblivious, as is ever the case, to the distresses of the management, and dead letter perfect in their parts, rattled off their lines with the utmost confidence. It is true that there was a considerable stage

responded to *Macduff's* knocking at the gate, for no less a person than the manager himself had been cast for the *Porter*, and he was then downstairs, for the twentieth time responding to the inquiries of the band and assuring them that no more money had been acquired from any source — even the quarter after diligent search had not been recovered; he was therefore too busy persuading them to return to their posts to think of his own. Meanwhile the knocking of *Macduff* (played by Master William Melville, content thus to support the *Macbeth* of Mr. Charles Melville in consideration of similar favors to be rendered to his *Toodles*) became so embarrassing that *Banquo*, supposedly retired to rest as required by the play, set out to look for the *Porter*, found him at a crisis with his exigent creditors, and received the order: "Go on yourself." This *Banquo* boldly did. He was received by the audience without surprise, the din *Macduff* was keeping up at door C being considered sufficient to rouse the whole castle. Not being up in the soliloquy of the *Porter*, *Banquo* simply strode to the portal and, with becoming loftiness of gesture, flung it open. Unfortunately, he did not anticipate that the noble *Macduff*, wondering at the delay, might be applying his eye to the crack to look for the cause of it, and would be likely to receive the swinging portal full on the nose — which in fact he did, and appeared wholly disconcerted by the violence of his reception.

After that, however, everything went smoothly. *Toodles*, notwithstanding his mishap, was in excellent form, and his fooling was greatly enjoyed. The interpreters of Bach and Beethoven having finally lapsed into hopeless apathy, worried the manager no more, but played to the end, even trying to accompany Master William Melville in his comic song, with the disadvantages of no

score and no rehearsal. The happy manager, thus relieved from carking care, plunged into the part of *George Acorn*, which he played with great fervor. Good Harry Seymour became so interested in the whole boyish adventure — unique in even his vast and varied experience — that I verily believe he would have paid eight dollars rather than not be there to see, and to have ever after the pleasure of relating what he had seen. The young ladies, who were cheerful and helpful to the end, were gallantly escorted to their homes by some of the young Thespians, but I doubt if they ever fully recovered from their bewilderment. As for the manager, having given the performance as announced and kept faith with his public to the letter, overcome every difficulty, and helped the carpenters to set the scenes and clear the stage in the intervals of hypnotizing the band and the costumer, he beamed on every one, distributed his commendations unsparingly, and went home with me triumphant, to act over again in our talks with the boys for many a day the varied incidents of what must go down in history as his first public attempt at management.

The next year (1857) his experience of dramatic art was immensely enlarged by witnessing the greatest light comedian of his own or any time, Charles Mathews, upon his return to America. He appeared at the Broadway Theatre, and to his first night we went in company with the future Surrogate, and literally fought our way through a vast crowd. No watchful policeman kept the crowd in line at the box-office in those days. Three or four fists grasping money were thrust at one time through the tiny aperture in the boarded window. An invisible hand within grasped the fists in turn and released the money from the fingers, which would then indicate the number of tickets.

unseen agent be then enclosed within the expectant fingers, and the owner would back away after a terrific struggle, and often with serious damage to his wardrobe. On this occasion our young friend Arnold, having donned a new frock coat, buttoned it up for the *mêlée*, and when he got to his seat found the garment had been split up the back! But a little thing like that was easily forgotten in the delights of the most finished impersonations to be seen on the stage. Mathews' opening bill was "Married for Money" and "Patter vs. Clatter," and the spirit of the star had so animated even the most stolid of the stock company that every one appeared to brilliant advantage. The butterfly comedy of Mathews was a revelation to the new generation accustomed to the stateliness of Lester Wallack and Jordan. In *Flutter* ("The Belle's Stratagem") and *Marplot* ("The Busybody") his touch was light as fancy.

And now (1859) Augustin's purpose in life was to take definite and practical shape. With all his love for the stage he had not made any attempt to enter that profession by the common door; nor did he, in taking the next step in his career in another profession, do so with any certainty as to where it would lead. When he attached himself to journalism, it was with an undefined sense that it led to the way he was to go.

## CHAPTER IV

How to become a journalist. And dramatic critic. Daly's first positions. *The Sunday Courier*. Weekly papers of the period. Dramatic reviewers. William Winter. Daly's integrity gains him appointment to the same post on five New York papers at the same time. Tilts between managers and newspapers. Between critics and managers. What to avoid in criticism. Perils of reporters. The "Draft Riot" of 1863. Daly and Howard in it. Howard's ruse. Daly's boldness. Panorama of amusements from 1859 to 1869. Wallack's trials. Burton retires. Changes. Castle Garden becomes an emigrant dépôt. Tragic stars. Forrest, Davenport, Edwin Booth. Charles Kean. Julia Dean. Laura Keane. German stars appear in English. Bandman and his phonetics. Mrs. Scheller. Her unfortunate accident as Pauline. Mrs. John Wood and Joseph Jefferson. Charles Wyndham a Civil War veteran. *Humpty Dumpty* at the Olympic. Edwin Booth and "Richelieu" just before the war. Significant lines. John S. Clarke in *Bob Tyke*. George, the Count Joannes. Indicted as a common barrator. William J. Florence and Malvina Pray. "Caste." A long memory defeats a lawsuit. John E. Owens in "Solon Shingle," a real star performance. Madam Celeste. The Black Crook. The Blondes. Isabel Cubas. The magicians. The acrobats. French comedy. Artemus Ward. Adah Isaacs Menken again. Daly no Bohemian. His work on the press. Stuart Robson's letter. Charles Fulton and Conway. Italian opera. Its ups and downs. English opera. Daly's plea for the strolling player.

WHEN Daly resolved to enter the profession of journalism, he went about it very simply and directly. Putting in his pocket the manuscript of a couple of articles he had written upon some amusing local incidents, he went down to the neighborhood of Printing House Square, where newspaper offices abounded. As James Smith, the

his next issue, there appeared to him a remarkably handsome and ingenuous youth with brilliant eyes and dark curling hair, whose demeanor was modest, notwithstanding the burning eagerness with which he announced his business. He at once aroused the interest of Smith and his associate, Charles F. Briggs, formerly editor of *Putnam's Magazine*, and a writer of ability. Not long ago I heard Parke Godwin, in his reminiscent address at the Authors' Club on the occasion of the celebration of his eighty-fifth birthday, speak in affectionate and appreciative terms of Briggs. Another of the proprietors of the *Courier* took an immediate liking to the young scribe. This was Douglas Taylor, printer and publisher, a power in the political world of his day and a lifelong patron of the drama.

The result of young Daly's visit was his immediate engagement upon the *Courier* at a small salary as general writer. A few weeks later the post of dramatic critic became vacant, and although he was but twenty-one years old he was promoted to it. At that date the daily newspapers published no Sunday editions, and the relation of the Saturday and Sunday journals to the social, political, literary, and art worlds was important. Their opinions were closely scanned by the interests and individuals affected. Complaints of bias or neglect were not infrequent. One great daily at one time abolished its dramatic department and turned over dramatic reviews to a succession of reporters from the city editor's staff. The weeklies, however, gave their writers pretty much a free hand. Robert Holmes, Joseph Howard, Edward House, Henry Clapp, Henry Morford, and Morris Phillips were as well known when they took their customary places on first nights as their brethren of the great dailies, among whom the most prominent were William



Winter, Edward Wilkins, A. C. Wheeler, Seymour, and Nicholson.

Into the ranks of dramatic critics was Daly immediately thrust. His case was unparalleled, for he had absolutely no acquaintance with any one connected with the stage; but his reading was extensive and his ideas of art definite. His crude and forcible articles over the name *Le Pèlerin* soon became noted, and he was complimented by the attacks of rivals with whom he rejoiced to break a lance. For ten years he pursued this calling, and earned such a reputation for honesty that he gradually came to be employed at the same time as dramatic critic on the *Sun*, the *Express*, the *Citizen*, and the *Times*, always retaining his post on the *Courier*. This also was unexampled.

During his ten years of journalism he became an industrious and successful writer of plays; but though one vocation grew out of the other, I shall keep the account of them separate, as both led by separate paths to the threshold of theatrical management. At present we have to see what befell the dramatic critic.

That functionary can involve his paper in no end of trouble. In Daly's time certain theatrical managers organized a boycott of the wealthiest of the daily papers on account of the tone of its musical criticisms. The Academy of Music led the war, and got all the chief play-houses as allies. They took their advertisements away from the foe and lavished them upon the other papers. This was absurd enough, but not so funny as it was to read the praises bestowed by the great daily upon the little establishments that stood by it. Reason, however, soon resumed its sway, and the quarrel was healed. Soon the boot was on the other foot. A querulous critic organized his fraternity against one of the principal theatres to avenge some personal slight. That is, in a word, the

last long, and was not so bitter as the managers' war. I remember in the chorus at the Academy when the "villagers" in the opera promenaded the stage with a figure dressed to represent the proprietor of the great daily, with his hand stretched behind him to indicate an "itching palm."

During Augustin's newspaper experience occurred the "Draft Riot" in New York. At the outbreak of the Civil War the President asked for seventy-five thousand volunteers to preserve the Union. A million offered themselves, only to be dismissed as unnecessary. Two years later, in 1863, conscription had to be resorted to, and until the State at the request of the municipal authorities authorized an appropriation for bounties to procure substitutes, the administration was exceedingly unpopular with the masses who were likely to suffer from the conscription. A short reign of terror commenced in July, 1863, when the New York City militia had been hurriedly sent to protect the Capitol at Washington. Only the local police were left to cope with the bands of incendiaries and terrorists that roamed the streets. As may be supposed, all the young newspaper men were in the thickest of the disturbances, looking for material. In company with Joseph Howard, Jr. (then a reporter on the *Tribune*) young Daly found himself surrounded by a mob on Second Avenue near a beleaguered fire-engine house. Both the journalists wore broad-brimmed black soft felt hats of the kind known as "wide-awakes," much affected (together with flowing locks) by the *littérateurs* of the period, but unfortunately associated in the minds of the mob with a lately defunct anti-foreign faction called "Know-Nothings," and with the anti-slavery newspapers which were supposed to be responsible for the war and all its consequences.

When therefore our adventurers were descried, the mob, which had been threatening the engine-house after looting and burning in every direction, shouted "Know-Nothings!" "Tribune reporters!" Howard, who was a resourceful youth, sought to pacify the crowd by explaining that he was simply deputized by Ben Wood of the *News* to give that friendly paper a truthful version of the facts. As Mr. Benjamin Wood and his paper, the *Daily News*, were known Southern sympathizers, it was an ingenious fib; but the mob derided the speaker, and might soon have made an end of both young men if the members of the fire company had not sallied from their house, dragged the imperilled youths inside, and locked the doors. This act redoubled the rage of the mob against the rescuers. Ordinarily the gallant volunteer fire department was the most popular institution in the City, but now the mob resented the zeal of the department in rushing to extinguish the incendiary fires that sprang up in every quarter. The door of the engine-house threatened to give way. My brother, preferring to be killed in the open rather than slaughtered like a rat in a hole, insisted upon being let out. His generous captors, with much misgiving, but yielding to his commands, opened the door sufficiently to thrust him forth, and instantly closed and locked it again — but unfortunately with the tail of his coat caught fast by it! This accident turned out to be his salvation; for when he immediately turned and hammered at the door to be released, the nearest mob leaders mistook his act, coupled with his expulsion, as a demonstration in their behalf. And when he finally tore himself free and faced them with looks more furious than their own, they made way for him to depart and turned to renew their assaults upon

was walking away in his disordered costume, a friendly mechanic advised him to take off his coat and carry it over his arm for fear some other mob would take him for an escaped draft-officer and "finish the job." Following the advice, Augustin walked home *à la Mose* in "Life in New York." As for the men inside the engine-house, the attention of the mob was soon diverted to some other quarter and the siege was raised.

The panorama of the theatres as it unrolled before the young journalist can be briefly sketched. Wallack moved his theatre from Broome Street to Thirteenth, and immediately got into straits from which only the indulgence of his creditors saved him. His example in retrieving his fortunes shows the advantage of a trained company. Opening with a failure in modern comedy, he fell back upon old comedy with success. In the course of his progress he produced melodrama and the gossamer pieces of Robertson, and did not hesitate to catch the popular tide during the visit of Dickens in 1867 by reviving a dramatization of "Oliver Twist." Nothing was foreign to his stage that could be done well. His predecessor Burton, after moving up from Chambers Street to the vicinity of Bond, retired for good. The Astor Place Opera House was converted into the Mercantile Library, and Castle Garden into an immigrant dépôt (the new Academy of Music on Fourteenth Street having become the home of Italian opera). The Broadway Theatre was soon dismantled for business purposes.

The stage then was never without a tragic star. Forrest's glory was setting, Davenport's at its zenith, and Edwin Booth's rising. Charles Kean and Ellen Tree revisited America. Julia Dean, Matilda Heron, Charlotte Cushman, and our foreign visitors Janauschek and Ristori brightened the stage. One Julia Dean, of the

dear daughters of memory, we may linger a moment. As boys we saw her in "Tortesa the Usurer," and as we walked home Augustin said, "Some day I shall write a play for her!" When he became famous in after years, she asked for that play. In the meantime she had gone through much trouble, but without losing her delicate charm. Her first marriage was a misfortune. Afterwards she became the wife of James Cooper. In reply to a note from Augustin on the subject of the play, came the announcement from Walter Cooper of her death in childbed:<sup>1</sup> "My brother feels confident that you will write<sup>2</sup> in kindness, and has reason to know that you were inspired by a warmth of friendship of no cold or common order for her who is no more."

Laura Keene (who was brought from England by Wallack) left him suddenly one day, and when she returned to New York Trimble the architect built a theatre for her, in which she brought out "Our American Cousin," with Jefferson as *Asa Trenchard* and Sothorn as *Lord Dundreary*. Notwithstanding many attractive productions she failed, and became a wandering star. To conquer in the field of management requires the gift of a Wellington, not of a Napoleon. Whenever we hear a young manager hailed as a Napoleon, we ought to tremble for his future.

Nearly all the German artists attempted the English-speaking stage. Daniel Bandman showed Augustin his scheme for mastering the inflections of the English speech by interlining his part with a phonetic version. Madam Methua-Scheller, a charming actress of sentimental parts, achieved the distinction of supporting Edwin Booth as *Ophelia*, and also, on one occasion, of assisting in a curious presentation of "Othello" with Bogumil Dawison (in

German), Booth (in English), and herself (in German-American). She was engaged by William Wheatley for an important revival of "The Lady of Lyons" at Niblo's, in which he appeared as Claude Melnotte. The fiasco of the first night was due to Wheatley's taking the center of the stage in the last scene and forcing Pauline (down at the left with her back to the audience) to rush to his arms when he threw off his cloak and revealed his identity. The poor lady did rush, tripped over her bridal gown, and pitched head foremost at his feet with her own soles in the air. The petrified figure of the amazed *Claude*, as he stood with outstretched arms and looked helplessly at the wreck at his feet, was too much for the risibilities of the audience, and a mighty roar of laughter went up, notwithstanding the real sympathy felt for poor *Pauline* as she was carefully assisted to a seat, her bridal wreath straightened, and her pretty nose inspected for damage.

When Laura Keene left her theatre, Mr. John Duff took it to give Mrs. John Wood the management and his friend Joseph Jefferson a permanent footing. This was the day of infinitely amusing burlesques, in which Mrs. Wood and Jefferson were unsurpassable. The accomplished Charles Wyndham was in this company. When he first came to America, he joined the Union Army and served in many engagements during the Civil War. After Mrs. John Wood left the Olympic (as the theatre was now called) the pantomimist George L. Fox was brought from the Bowery, and the long reign of "Humpty Dumpty" began.

Edwin Booth began a memorable engagement before the outbreak of the Civil War. This was at the Winter Garden, formerly the Metropolitan Theatre. The inclination of the great mass of Northerners was for peace

and a resort to diplomacy to calm the excited South, and the significant lines of the aged *Cardinal Richelieu* to his page: "Take away the sword — States can be saved without it!" evoked thunders of applause. At a later date, when all efforts at adjustment had failed and the Northern spirit was roused to arms, the same applause was awarded to a still more striking phrase from the same lips in the same play: "First employ all methods to conciliate; failing those — all means to crush!" A notable production of Booth was "*Julius Cæsar*," given in 1864 by the three Booth brothers in aid of the fund for the erection of the Shakespeare monument in Central Park. Edwin was *Brutus*, Junius, *Cassius*, and John Wilkes, the fiery inheritor of their father's rash and uncontrollable spirit, assumed the rôle of the impetuous *Mark Antony*.

A prominent star at the Winter Garden was Booth's brother-in-law, John S. Clarke, whose *Toodles* and *Major de Boots* were extravagantly humorous. Clarke, like the famous Robson of London, who unexpectedly revealed in burlesque an unsuspected depth of emotion, proved that a strong dramatic instinct is the foundation of the comic power. He revived an old play, "*The School of Reform*" and appeared as the ruffian *Bob Tyke*. His impersonation deserved more attention than it then received from the press generally; but it did not pass without critical appreciation from Daly, for which the manager Stuart (an old journalist and critic) wrote his thanks.

Among the theatrical apparitions of the time was the grotesque figure of George, the Count Joannes, as the old-time actor George Jones styled himself when, after an absence of years in Europe, he returned to America. He and his wife Melinda were once (1831) considerable favorites with the public. He built the Avon Theatre

America as a "Count," it was seen that he had become quite unbalanced, but that he possessed a keen wit, extensive superficial acquirements, and an amazing flow of language. He intruded himself upon every public occasion until he was noticed ironically in the papers, and then he turned upon them with prosecutions for libel and conducted his own cases, in order, it was easily seen, to display his forensic aptitude. One of these actions was brought against the *Tribune* in the old Court of Common Pleas presided over by Judge Charles P. Daly. The Count (who was never satisfied to call himself an attorney at law, but "counsellor of the Supreme Court") prosecuted in person and managed by his dexterity to confound the opposition, irritate the witnesses, and annoy the Court. After several such suits, however, he was arraigned as a *common barrator*, or incitor of litigation, and was effectually quieted as a litigant. While the novelty of his eccentricities lasted he was found to be a capital companion at dinner, and discussed all subjects in theology, politics, and art with equal confidence and brilliancy. His last resort was to the stage again, where he cut a ludicrous figure and was unmercifully gayed by boisterous audiences. The late E. A. Sothern impersonated his eccentricities in an amusing sketch called "The Crushed Tragedian." A sane man gifted with Jones' abilities could have made his mark in any profession.

As early as 1862 the excellent actor William J. Florence and his spirited wife (Malvina Pray) abandoned the old-fashioned "Irish Boy and Yankee Gal" parts and began better work. His *Cap'n Cuttle* and her *Susan Nipper* were excellent. His production of Robertson's "Caste" at Wallack's old house was a benefit to the profession. It served to display as an artist of the highest type



prise in light comedy and as a skilful stage manager, and Owen Marlowe as a superior "swell" in *Hawtreys*. The greatest surprise, however, was the claim that the manager had been able to reproduce the play from memory after hearing and seeing it a number of times in London. This claim defeated the attempt of Wallack, who had the American rights from the English proprietors (but no copyright), to enjoin the production as a piracy of an unpublished play. Florence's plea was sceptically regarded at the time, but considering an actor's power of committing to memory the longest part, it was hardly open to question.

In contrast to this excellent play and admirable company was the greater success of John E. Owens as *Solon Shingle* in the trumpery drama "The People's Lawyer," with an indifferent company. Not even Sothern in *Dundreary* made such a success as this eminently "star" performance and its amazingly lifelike picture of an aged sodden village teamster.

Madam Celeste was here again from London, in "The French Spy," with all her former grace and agility, but alas! all mechanical now. Lotta came to us from California, and Maggie Mitchell acquired fame as the sprite-like *Fanchon*. William Horace Lingard gave huge audiences "Captain Jinks of the Horse Marines," while his talented helpmeet sparkled in burletta. Then "The Black Crook" intoxicated playgoers and brought trainloads of people from every point of the compass to see Bonfanti, Sangalli, and Rigl and a hundred pretty coryphées; the ballet troupe had been brought over by Jarrett and Palmer to open in the Academy of Music in "La Biche au Bois," but the Academy burnt down, and Wheatley of Niblo's incorporated the ballet with a

had just written. Jarrett deplored the attacks made upon the play, which was declared unfit for ladies to visit; he wrote to Daly (as a newspaper editor) that a careful count of one night showed that of 2973 spectators 1345 were ladies — a complete refutation of the calumny.

Soon the "British Blondes," as the company playing "Ixion" was called, irradiated the town; Miss Lydia Thompson, Miss Lisa Weber, and Miss Pauline Markham, with one real actress, Miss Ada Harland, and a capital comedian, Harry Beckett, were the attractions that filled Wood's Broadway Theatre. Then the Kiralfys, Hungarian dancers of athletic type, claimed public notice; and Isabel Cubas the Spanish dancer, with flaming eyes, dazzling teeth revealed in an eager smile, and sinuously moving arms. Nightly the original Hermann, *prestidigitateur* (who curtly replied to a spectator who wished to put his "second sight" exhibition to an unexpected test, "Sir, I am not de debbil!"), shot single cards from a pack in his hand to the top gallery with a single effort of his powerful wrist. Robert Heller came after him with a different style, — the "Magicien Farceur." An oddity in theatricals of the time was the illusion named after its inventor, "Pepper's Ghost." Plays were altered to introduce the trick.

French comedy was imported by Paul Juignet and exhibited in Niblo's Saloon, a concert hall attached to the Garden, and here "Artemus Ward" (Charles F. Brown) made his first appearance. He began by displaying, like Josh Billings (Mr. Shaw), the beauties of simplified spelling, then essayed the platform. From England in 1866 he wrote to Daly that he was engaged by *Punch* for a series of papers, "Artemus Ward in London," and gave Mr. Howard Paul a characteristic introduction: "At

Rochester they label their best flour XXX; Mr. Paul is a triple Xer. Trooly yours, A. Ward." Miss Adah Isaacs Menken took pains to write to Daly that the report of her engagement to Artemus was incorrect, and Ward himself wrote vaguely: "It won't do to be married."

Miss Menken was a steady correspondent of the dramatic editors, who were all enrolled as "chums" and "pals." In London she made her *début* at Astleys, and wrote that all the Bohemians, critics, and authors "are old men, but quite jolly." She had ambition. Having made fame for herself in tights as Mazeppa, she yearned to play Rosalind, Beatrice, Bianca, Julia, Parthenia, and Lady Gray; "all of which" (she wrote) "I once revelled in." At one time she confided that Ada Clare was translating a vaudeville from the French to be called "The Courtship and Marriage of Adah Isaacs Menken" — "but of course," she naïvely added, "it contains nothing actually relating to my life."

Among the Bohemians Daly was never classed. He could neither smoke nor drink, and had no taste for gossip. His work was praised by Henry J. Raymond, by Erastus Brooks, by Robert B. Roosevelt, and by Charles G. Halpin (Miles O'Reilly). It was watched by "the profession," as one letter shows:

"St. James, Suffolk Co., L. I.

Friday, July 19", 1867.

My dear Sir

As an humble member of the theatrical profession allow me to thank you for the very kind article in yesterday's 'Times' denouncing the general practice of classing all females who perform in concert saloons and other like places as 'actresses.' It is certainly very unfair and disrespectful to a profession which contributes so much to lighten the hours of the people, and I

your generosity in calling the attention of the public to its injustice. So many annoyances of this nature have come under my observation, and your notice so entirely reflects the feeling of my brethren, that I cannot resist the impulse of expressing my gratitude.

With best wishes for your prosperity and health, I remain

Respectfully,

Yours &c.

Stuart Robson."

Chandos Fulton was one of his early friends on the press and a great crony of F. B. Conway, who with his wife managed the Brooklyn Theatre, the first regular playhouse in that city. Conway was immense on department. He used to describe the respective departments of Mrs. Conway and himself as "practical business" (his wife's) and "belles lettres" (his own). He and Fulton had the misfortune to be taken down at the same time with a long illness, during which they exchanged friendly inquiries. Fulton, being the younger, got out first and went to see Conway, who had just begun to sit up. "How did you manage to spend the — ah — tedium of convalescence?" asked Conway. "Oh, in a variety of simple ways," replied Fulton. "Renewing the — ah — pleasures of the — ah — table?" "Oh, no." "Resorting to the — ah — solace of the — ah — bottle?" "Oh dear no. I simply sat at the window and drank in the joys of nature." "Good Gad!" observed Conway, "death were preferable!"

Music as well as the drama was within the sphere of the general theatrical critic. At the Academy, Gassier, Gazzaniga, Medori, Colson, Patti, Nilssen, Tietjens, Fabbri, Kellogg, D'Angri, Phillips, Piccolomini, Lorini, Van Zandt, Testa, Hinckley, and McCulloch were

maiden name Genevieve Ward and adopted the dramatic stage. The impresarios were Maretzek, Ullman, Grau, Strakosch, Rosa, and Grover. Brignoli ruled in popular favor for years with Susini, Barili, Fornes, Mazzoleni, Ronconi, Rovere, and Habelmann. Operatic management was always risky. In 1860 Ullman gave it up for want of patronage and published a card to let the public know why. His singers then formed the "associated Artists" and gave a couple of seasons upon their own responsibility.

When Italian opera was sung at the Astor Place Opera House, Maretzek actually came down to fifty cents admission to the boxes and twenty-five to the circle; but even such bargain days did not bring a rush. Even in the days of the Academy there were independent impresarios. Jacob Grau took Lorini, Castri, and Morensi to Niblo's and Maretzek took Kellogg, Stockton, Testa and Ronconi, and Amelia Houck to the Winter Garden. Carl Anschutz gave German opera with Johanssen and Rotter at Wallack's little old theatre, and German song birds once carolled in the Olympic.

Opera in English was recurrent and popular. After Caroline Richings in "The Enchantress," the charming Louisa Pyne with Harrison gave us Balfe, and once, for her benefit, a revival of "Midas," in which she was a sightly *Apollo*. Miss Kellogg and Mrs. Seguin came after them. Gabriel Harrison, unknown now but once prominent in every field of amusement, managed an English opera troupe, of which Mary Shaw, Castle, and Campbell were principals; and his comedian was no less a person than Theodore Thomas! French opera was practically introduced by Bateman in the Fourteenth Street Theatre with Tostée. Paul Juignet added the

Daly managed his first theatre, he had Juignet for a season as stage manager.

Daly in his ten years as reviewer developed a profound sympathy for all who were struggling along by-paths as well as on the highroad. I happened once to tell of a poor little travelling company that visited the village near which my happiest holidays were spent, and how my host, Judge Robinson, and I led pretty nearly the whole population to the show. Augustin said: "I'm glad! Wherever you may be always patronize the poor players."

## CHAPTER V

Daly's first play: "Leah the Forsaken." Kate Bateman. Her parents. Successful performance in Boston. Production in New York. Received warmly by the audience. Unknown author attacked by critics. Defended by Wilkes' *Spirit*. George William Curtis's praise. He sees an historical parallel and a national lesson. Played in London. Miss Bateman's account of the first night. She sees Ristori in the German original. Naïve criticism. Daly sues Bateman père. A. Oakey Hall his counsel. Report of Hall's summing up from memory. Account of Hall and of his subsequent troubles and victory. Next play "Taming a Butterfly." Frank Wood, collaborator. Written for Mrs. John Wood. Burlesque of "Leah." Third play, written for Mrs. Methuascheller. "Lorlie's Wedding." Miss Avonia Jones at the Winter Garden — "Judith" by Daly and Paul Nicholson. Daly adapts "La Sorcière" for her. Her letter describing her favorite parts.

No dramatic critic lives who has not been tempted to write a play. Daly began with a drama of contemporaneous events. Within a week after news of the attempt of Orsini and his confederates upon the life of Napoleon III reached New York, a play on the subject was in the hands of Laura Keane. It was politely returned, and laid away. Three years later the author produced one of the most successful dramas of the century.

Kate Bateman and her sister Ellen, now grown to womanhood, had been the famous Bateman children, precocious impersonators of Richard III and other mature parts. Such prodigies were commoner then than now. Scarcely two generations before, Master Betty was the talk of London; a little later Clara Fisher crowded the

were a great attraction. Mrs. Bateman was a dramatic writer of ability and Mr. Bateman an experienced actor and manager. He was looking for a play suitable for his daughter Kate, whose dramatic power developed with her years, an unusual case with child prodigies. Just now Mosenthal electrified Vienna with his "Deborah," a play representing the persecution of Jews in the seventeenth century by one class of the community, and the Christian charity of another class. A German friend mentioned this play to Bateman and he suggested it to Daly, who procured a copy, had it hastily and roughly translated, perceived at once its theatrical value, and adapted it for performance in English. The Batemans were delighted with it. Mrs. Bateman, who later compared the adaptation with the original, expressed her satisfaction that the most applauded line in it was Daly's and not Mosenthal's.

Bateman staked all his means and practically his daughter's fortunes on the play, engaged an expensive company, brought it out in Boston<sup>1</sup> under the name of "Leah the Forsaken," and telegraphed to Daly the news of its immediate success. The ensuing month it was presented at Niblo's Garden<sup>2</sup>, to an audience that overflowed the house. Miss Bateman, then in her first youthful vigor, played with tenderness, pathos, and dignity, and was assisted by the veteran James W. Wallack, Jr., young Edwin Adams, the beautiful Mrs. Chanfrau, J. G. Barrett, J. W. Lanergan, Edward Lamb, and Mrs. Skerrett. That night Daly heard for the first time his lines spoken on the stage.

The young journalist eagerly scanned the newspapers for the verdict of his fellow critics. The name of the author had not been announced by Bateman for fear of "trade" jealousy, and Daly kept away from rehearsals



accordingly. These precautions were, however, unavailing. The translation and adaptation were attacked ferociously; the mildest reviews suggested that the book be entirely rewritten. But a champion arose,<sup>1</sup> and in a comprehensive article ascribed the adverse criticism to literary jealousy, and asserted that the most effective parts of the dialogue were those in idiomatic English.

The most conspicuous advocate of the play was George William Curtis, editor of *Harper's Weekly*, who wrote about it in the fifth week of its run.<sup>2</sup> He beheld in it an appeal for another down-trodden race on whose account a great civil war was then raging. "It is an English adaptation of a German sensational drama, and there never was a more timely play. As a simple sensational performance it is remarkable. The play is wrought in bold, coarse strokes. There is never any doubt as to its meaning." The writer finds a parallel between the class hatred depicted and that which he thought threatened the destruction of the nation, and concludes: "Whenever and wherever you can, go and see "Leah" and have the lesson burned in upon your mind which may save the national life and honor."

It was not necessary to appeal to patriotic or to political sentiment to make the play one of the most popular of modern dramas. It was played throughout this country and in England, and has ever since been the vehicle for essays of female histrionic ambition. It was not rewritten by Daly. Minor critics might condemn the inelegance of its lines, but the public, like Curtis and other men of mark, appreciated the "bold coarse strokes" that reached their mark. Daly wrote to Mosenthal and sent him a copy of the adaptation, receiving a most friendly reply approving of his work in adapting a German "peo-

ple's play" to another nation. The young tragedienne—then scarce twenty years old—wrote to Daly an account of her first performance of the play in London:

"London, Oct. 6'

My dear friend.

Please take a walk down to the Park, extend your hands towards the various unhappy newspaper offices, and say 'Bless you—and you—and you—and all, all, all!' and quietly take your way to No. 9 Spruce, and if you should meet——<sup>1</sup> on the road, embrace him and tell him I love him dearly, for such is my feeling of amiability at present that even that crew come in for a portion of it. I should have written you a line by the last steamer, as I had promised myself—but I was so very much like the 5th Act, on Friday morning, that I was unable to go beyond scratching a few words to my mother and Ellen.

You can scarcely feel more content than I do to know that at last the play has been justly treated; and the knowledge of that fact gave me as much pleasure on Thursday night—as the congratulations of my friends on my acting did.

Well, I want to tell you how the play went. The first act went all smoothly—of course no demonstration until Leah's entrance. But when that amiable young female made her appearance the reception was all by itself, as Papa would say, and the end of the act was electrical in its effect upon the audience. (That sounds like a Phila. newspaper.) Second Act charming and tender to a degree. Third Act a little slow at first because the priest had been indulging in a long dose of the 'Haunted Man' lately, and he consequently was sepulchral. But the end warmed them up and the call was fierce. Then came my dear old Fourth Act and as I had been a good child and had 'reserved my power' I was quite able to give my young friend Rudolf that little gentle remonstrance in the way he deserved. The applause at the end of the act was something more than banging of hands; & the dear good people looked so happy when I came out, that it looked more like an audience of personal friends than entire strangers.

Then the fifth act came in just as charmingly as possible; and they cried and applauded — and applauded and cried, in the most industrious manner. And when the curtain fell and Mr. Webster — very choky and very happy — took me before the audience, the greeting I received was all I could have ever hoped for, and you know me well enough to remember that I am not pleased with a little.

Among other wonderful things I must tell you that Leah's dress has been changed. She wears a lovely maroon skirt in place of the yellow; and it is a great improvement, for the G. T. A. (great tragic actress?) was short, not to say dumpy, in the aforesaid yellow. Then, oh! delightful thought — she has a drapery that is — words fail — *and* shoes of the *period*!!

But now prepare to weep. The dear old rags are gone; and I am wretchedly respectable in a sort of Friar Laurence affair. Poor old rags — it was too bad — but they were so very raggy.

The papers are all splendid. I beg to call your attention to the *Times* of Friday, and there is a gush in the *Post* of this morning — something in your own style — mind, I never find fault with it.

The houses have been crowded. We are intensely fashionable too. The Queen's box was filled last night with a large party of the Marchioness of Ely's, and to-morrow the Prince and Princess are coming.

So you see everything seems as favorable as I could possibly wish, and with the critics and the public with me I quietly look forward to another lifetime of Leah.

All this time I have never thanked you for your last letter — But I do now sincerely and I hope you continue in the same amiable course. Pray go over to Washington Avenue and drink six cups of tea on the strength of Leah's success.

Very truly your friend

K. J. Bateman.

You don't know how glad I should have been to have seen you and — last Thursday. It did not seem quite natural — the absence of your two faces.

Another letter, a prior one, tells of being taken to see Ristori in "Deborah" when the family toured the Continent before the London *début*; we must remember that the writer was hardly more than a child:

"The phrenologists all say I have no 'veneration,' and I have begun to think the assertion to be very correct. When I saw Ristori — while I was sitting in the box waiting for the curtain to go up — I worked myself up into a nervous fever, and when she came on I was in a positive tremble from excitement and I imagined I should at once have my breath taken away. . . . Gradually my breathing recovered its usual placidity and, I grieve to confess it, was never troubled again during the performance of 'Elizabeth,' 'Marie Stuart' and 'Deborah,' in which characters I saw her. I say I grieve because I wanted to have been made to feel as I had never felt in the Theatre before. But no — It must be my 'veneration' — I can't account for it in any other way. I did not so much wonder at not going into ecstasies over Elizabeth and Marie Stuart, for although I had read Schiller's play — which hers is a translation of — my Italian being rather bad I put it down to my not understanding the words, and reserved — not my 'power' — but my enthusiasm for 'Leah,' or rather 'Deborah.' How I wish you could have seen it! I was so disappointed I nearly cried. Poor dear old 'Leah.' Just think of her coming on and toddling down into a remote corner of the stage, where no one could see her, and looking as amicably as possible at the youth who brought her on, as if she rather liked it. The end of the first act was tame — tame don't express it. I mean by that the end of the first scene in our play — for Ristori plays it in four acts. The infant of four years of age was a creature of at least thirteen or fourteen. She made me shudder! No attempt at scenery or music whatever, which made it still more dreary and cold. 'I don't care to leave this farm' and Jacob were discovered in the last act alone reaping in the ocean, the ruined cross was shoved on by a youth who, to say the least, was not dressed in the costume of the period."

churches were taken on and off in a way that would have been scarcely thought endurable in an amateur performance. The whole affair was somnolent to a degree, and if you could have seen Papa's face and watched the various emotions depicted thereon during the evening you would I am sure have been entertained. Well, I'll act 'Deborah' for your benefit in our Parlor some evening when I don't feel like knitting, and let you see how you like it.

Papa and everyone in the party send very kind remembrances in which I assure you I join them, and with strict orders that you do not permit yourself to be taken for a Tribune reporter again<sup>1</sup> and that you present yourself at Washington Avenue when we arrive — believe me

Very truly your friend

K. J. Bateman

See what a nice *J.* I made you."

With Miss Bateman Daly maintained relations of warm regard all his life; but he soon fell out with Mr. Bateman, with whom he could not agree as to the extent of the reward which the author ought to have for his services (few authors and managers can), and the outcome was a lawsuit. A. Oakey Hall, then District Attorney and one of the most prominent figures at the Bar, summed up for Daly at the trial in a way to induce self-examination and repentance in Bateman and to secure a verdict in spite of the multitude of legal impediments industriously scattered in the way by the defendant's counsel. Hall's speech was much talked about, and the *Herald* wished a report of it to publish. Unfortunately it had not been taken down by the court stenographer, but Daly wrote a report of it from recollection and got this compliment from Hall:

<sup>1</sup> Referring to the incident of the Draft Riot.

"City and County of New York  
District Attorney's Office  
April 24, 1866.

My dear Client.

Yr. report of the speech is ten times better than the original. I never before so well realized how a reporter can 'make an orator.' I was happy to illustrate the Guild of Literature and in it I find my repayment.

It has never been my practice to charge a counsel fee to a brother in the law or in literature, and therefore the delicacy of your note may be withdrawn.

Very cordially Yrs.  
A. Oakey Hall.

P.S. If a 'case' be made up I should like to see it before settled, &c.

Aug. Daly Esqr."

Mr. Hall was one of Daly's earliest friends, and felt the admiration for the ambitious youth shared by so many of the elder men of his day. This was Hall's happiest period. His versatility found employment in literature as well as law. He was an excellent speaker, possessing a voice of musical quality. As district attorney he gained such esteem that he was easily elected and reelected to the office of mayor. In office, like another literary politician, Disraeli, he left details to subordinates and relied upon their accuracy and honesty. It was during his second term as mayor that the duty of auditing the unsettled claims against the abolished board of county supervisors was, by special statutory provision, imposed upon him in conjunction with the Comptroller Connolly, and Tweed, the former chairman of the board. Hall audited whatever his associates approved without looking into the merits of each claim. The disclosure of enormous frauds led to the indictment separately of the three

officials: Mayor Hall being indicted solely for "failure to audit" — a charge considered by many legal minds at the time as inappropriate upon the facts. His trial was held in the Common Pleas, as the judges of the General Sessions, John K. Hackett and Gunning S. Bedford, were his intimate friends. A great surprise was sprung when the prosecution called to the witness stand one of the fraudulent claimants — a contractor named Garvey, supposed to be in Europe, whither he had fled at the first exposures. Garvey, while not being able to connect Mayor Hall with the plots he revealed, nevertheless unfolded such a tale of plunder as was likely to prove disastrous to any member of the city government to whom negligence could in any way be imputed. The death of one of the jurors before the completion of the trial was therefore most fortunate for Mayor Hall. When some months later he was notified by the prosecution to stand a second trial, it was at Christmas time; and the public, then accustomed to the confession of Garvey, thought the selection of date was oppressive. Hall, however, readily accepted the challenge. He asked no delay, and his counsel accepted the first twelve jurymen called to the box. He was acquitted, there being complete failure to prove criminal intent.

The success of "Leah the Forsaken" invited Daly to continue this line of work. Next year he was asked by Mrs. John Wood, managing the Olympic Theatre, to give her a comedy; and he worked with Frank Wood, a young newspaper friend, upon an adaptation of Sardou's "Le Papillon," which Mrs. Wood produced under the name of "Taming a Butterfly." Frank Wood had recommended himself to Daly by his clever burlesque called "Leah, the Forsook," produced at the Winter Garden <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Summer of 1862.

with the fat Dan Sitchell as "*Leah, a Shrewish Maiden*," the gigantic Mack Smith as the "*gentle Maddelena*," the beautiful Emily Thorne as *Rudolph*, and the lean and hungry-looking Sol Smith as the wicked *Nathan*.

The scene of Daly's next activities was again in the Winter Garden. This playhouse was erected on the site of Tripler Hall, a concert room later called "Metropolitan Hall," and altered to the Metropolitan Theatre (which became Laura Keene's new theatre for a brief season); it then became Burton's new theatre, and was finally reconstructed by Boucicault and named "The Winter Garden." Madame Methua-Scheller gave Daly one of her favorite parts to turn into English for her début in that tongue. It was produced under the title "*Lorlie's Wedding*."

Miss Laura Keene, now (1863) a travelling star, announced her want of a play in these lines to Daly:

"Riverside Lawn, Acushnet, Mass.

My dear Sir:

I want a comedy! I have the plot—situation etc. etc. all sketched. It would not be a task of any great length for you and would not diminish your rapidly growing reputation as an author. Will you undertake it? And what terms per night for the U. S. and England will you name? I have given the subject a great deal of thought and have been collecting matter for it for the last three years. Boucicault and Tom Taylor are willing to do it but cannot see it as an *American* comedy. I cannot see it as an English one, for it is of *us* most essentially and will I am convinced go better in England for being American. I need not tell you that I want a fine part. I played so much bad business in my own theatre (ever sinking the actress in the manageress) that I have refused every offer to New York, awaiting the time when a rôle that suited me should present itself,



that would enable me to do justice to myself. Will you give me your views at as early a date as possible?

Very truly yours,

Laura Keene.

August 1863."

It is instructive to find that although the star had the plot, the situation, and the material ready for the dramatist, it devolved upon him to create a "fine part," to realize the ideal which the star had been waiting years for, and to give the piece a setting of brilliant dialogue and character-portrayal to be recognized as distinctly American. Such are the tasks of "no great length" imposed upon playwrights.

What poor travelling stars had to put up with in the war days (1863) is related by Miss Keene's manager, Brough:

"You can hardly conceive the poverty of talent in the theatres of the west, and the actors' insolent independence. They will only do what they d—— please. Only last evening a gentleman named Lanergan who was cast for the rôle of 'Old Hardcastle' in 'She Stoops to Conquer' absented himself from the theatre, giving as his only reason the part was not good enough for him! As he was a useful man the manager retained him. At Woods theatre another actor, — Wight, — played the first act of a drama and then walked out of the house and got drunk. The management were compelled to look over it & retain him in the theatre. So much for the Western drama. Miss Keene says if she saw the slightest hope of doing any justice to your play she would try it."

Another star with another commission for the author took possession of the Winter Garden. Miss Avonia Jones was the daughter of the Count Joannes (or George Jones) and Melinda Jones, already mentioned. She was of good height, and dark, with regular features and a

musical voice, but with a monotonous delivery. Her mother was a lady of majestic mien, who had played heavy female parts and had even appeared as *Romeo*.

For Miss Avonia Jones Daly prepared "Judith" in collaboration with Paul Nicholson, a fellow journalist. Daly next adapted for her "La Sorcière," then "Garcia," and finally "La Tireuse des Cartes." "The Sorceress," under which title the first play was announced, was a tale of maternal suffering under the barbarous practice of *droit de Seigneur*. Daly proposed to make the heroine of the play the daughter, not the mother, and this elicited the following comment from the star:

"I can't make out how you intend transforming *Jeanne* into a 'daughter' and yet keep the powerful interest which in the original is centered in the 'mother.' I always think the latter phase of life the most powerful and I am most fond of portraying such emotions. Daughters I care little about. I don't mind playing middle-aged women, for I have so long been accustomed to it in 'Lady Macbeth,' 'Lady Constance' &c. As you have never seen me act I must tell you that my style is passionate. When I love it must be madly; not the tender gentle love that shrinks from observation, but love that would sweep all before it and if thwarted would end in despair, madness and death. In fact in acting I am more fond of being bad than good. Hate, revenge, despair, sarcasm and resistless love I glory in; charity, gentleness and the meeker virtues I do not care for."

This desperate character was as far from the good Miss Jones' natural disposition as from her power of portrayal. She was already the wife of the eminent English tragedian, G. V. Brooke, was devoted to her mother and her sister, and was without a particle of the stormy passion and fire in dramatic impersonations which she had evidently set up as her ideal.

## CHAPTER VI

A tour of the South with the Daly plays and Miss Jones as star. Letters from the South during the War period. Norfolk revisited. The blacks. The colored provost guard. Recollections of the Taylor and Fillmore campaign. Torchlight procession. Lady with the wreath. By railroad to Nashville. Blackguards in the "Ladies' Car." Military acquaintances. Illness. Steamboat on the Mississippi. Methua and his illuminated letters. Guerillas. A trap baited with cotton. Stuck on a sandbar. Transferred. Cairo the filthy. The war fatal to civic housekeeping. Aground again and again. A better class of passengers. Despair of the barkeeper. Memphis brings up the average of wickedness. Newspapers. Notice of distinguished arrival. Permit from military authorities. Rumors of guerillas. Alarm bells empty the theatres. Return to New York. Compliment from Mrs. Jones. Appreciation of her daughter. Matilda Heron commands a play. Ada Isaacs Menken to have another.

AFTER Miss Jones' season at the Winter Garden was completed, Daly, then utterly inexperienced in management, was asked by Miss Jones to manage a starring tour with her in his plays through the South. He undertook it with complete confidence. Its pecuniary return to him was, absolutely nothing, but the preparation for his future career was valuable. The tour was to take in those cities occupied by the Federal troops (no others were accessible). Daly's Southern birth would, it was hoped, be a recommendation to the old residents. During his absence I substituted for him upon his various newspapers.

The history of this tour is condensed into letters which would be uninteresting to the general reader as mere accounts of theatrical business (very much alike in all

periods and under all "stars"), if they did not give some glimpses of local conditions seen through the smoke of battle. A letter from Norfolk containing childhood reminiscences I venture to insert:

"Norfolk, Va. September, 1864.

You see I am in the old town. I have walked again the queer, curling, odd, ridiculous old streets and the little lanes and short cuts our boy feet toddled over. I have seen the old market and examined the old pump. The market women gather round it as of old to wash their dry vegetables and give them a watery semblance of freshness. It was grand market day to-day and the old fashioned queue of wagons and carts with the horses taken out and tied to a bundle of hay behind, extended up market square and up Main Street to Church. I have made but one purchase, but I have duplicated that one lots of times — Figs! Think of it — Figs! At the sight of them — at the taste — visions of our little pilferings in the back garden of Johnson's house held me in a retrospective trance! I was a little rascal again up among the branches and you were the conscience-touched but overruled little brother under them catching the fruit — ripe — cracking and luscious which I threw down. I even had a sore mouth again from the recollection, and from present sensations I believe I have a sore stomach from a reality of gormandizing. I feasted cheaply. Five cents a dozen! Father Abraham! Would we not give five cents apiece in New York?"

"Norfolk, Sept. 15, '64.

My room in the hotel (which is next to the Bank on the corner of Bank St. and Main) is exactly opposite our old house in Dodd's Lane. It is now occupied by Darkies; indeed there are few places in town not filled with the black. They are two thirds of the foot passengers, they are storekeepers, barbers, market men, ferrymen, omnibus drivers, coachmen, ticket takers, soldiers, Provost guards, waiters — everything. They are cheap and sassy. You can have a dozen to run a single

errand, and the one selected falls down and thanks you for giving him the job and charges you nothing for doing it!

We had a riot in town between the negro Provost Guard and a lot of tipsy sailors yesterday in broad day. It was a big fight and finished up several sailors and a few darkies. The 'bracks' in consequence are bigger than ever." . . .

"Norfolk, Va. September 21, '64.

In my perambulations the other day I searched out the old circus camping ground. It is a Darkey quarter now and the spot where the ring used to be raised and the horses run, the clown joke his old jokes and the ringmaster snap his long whip, is covered with dingy little two-story negro habitations. The spot where the old Avon Theatre stood is now covered by the town jail. Think of it!

I passed Corsee's house too and thought of our famous torchlight procession, of the 'three cheers for the Lady of the Wreath,' of cousin blushing, and all — for the old porch looked so old and so natural."

The torchlight procession referred to took place during the presidential campaign of 1848 between Taylor and Fillmore on the Whig ticket, and Cass and Butler on the Democratic. We small urchins, aged eight and ten, paraded with the cohorts of the latter, and were intrusted with a transparency on a pole which occasionally came to the ground with a crash and nearly tilted us up on end. We erected a flagstaff in our yard with a banner and the legend "Cass & Butler" in large black letters on it, printed for us by the local Democratic journal. Notwithstanding these exertions Cass and Butler were defeated.

"Nashville, October 2, 1864.

What a horrid journey we have had to be sure. You say I will find changes of water — and they will disagree with me. I poison each tumblerfull I drink with  $\frac{1}{2}$  dozen drops of whiskey.

Only think of it! I drink wotka! The world will end in '64.

The railroad accommodations out here are horrid; on the night trains especially so. Low narrow seats, dirty floors, no ventilation, brutes and blackguards in the so-called ladies' car! No water, dim lights, filthy stations and long waits for 'connections,' are a few of the evils. We waited two hours in the cold night air (between 11 and 1 o'clock) for a train at a town called Seymour, between Cincinnati and Louisville, because the ladies' saloon stank so badly and the 'gentlemen's' (?) ditto was crowded with noisy, blasphemous and filthy soldiers and conscripts."

"Nashville, October 9.

I have made very few military acquaintances here, preferring, if possible, to be known to the citizens. I have had a friendly interview with the Mayor and Secretary of State; have become intimate with the Paymaster of the department — know the Cheatemers (very honest people) — 'oldest inhabitants' and relations of the Reb. Gen., &c. &c. I have been quite unwell, though (compelled to stay much in my room) so I have been unable to enlarge the circle. I caught a severe cold on two rainy nights (Tuesday and Wednesday) and it rushed to my throat. It is as full of rocks now as Broadway when Russ or Belgian is being laid. I have a mountain on the outside (under right ear) about as big as a baby's head, as hard as the heart of a melodramatic cruel uncle and as painful as love's parting."

"October 26,

On the Mississippi.

My point of date is not very definite, I admit, for it might mean anywhere within five hundred or a thousand miles or so. The river is very low, and besides the usual traditional snags which threaten us at every bend, sandbars are now to be dreaded. Just above us are two steamers high and dry on a bank. I tremble as I gaze. They have been so three days. What a chance for the Guerillas, who line the banks all the way down.

From the sight I had of the venerable paternal parent of waters this afternoon I don't think much of that Mighty 'strame.'

It is very narrow and very dirty. In color the water varies from a sick green to an invalid yellow. You come by some pretty spots occasionally, though. Rural and romantic houses built high up on the bluffs. The foliage too is all lovely to the eye just now and the river shore is grand in autumn colors. What a magnificent album might be made up of the autumn leaves alone. I have seen nothing out here though to equal the western Pennsylvania forests in their Indian summer dress. Such richness of color, such variety of shade, so luxuriously thick. As you rush by them or through them it all looks like fairyland or dreamland.

Ask Methua why he don't write to me. He has commenced 'a series' of 'Artistic' letters to Miss J. No. 2 (he numbers them and pages them) came yesterday in an envelope much larger than this sheet of paper."

J. Guido Methua's illuminated epistles were unique. He was a painter of skill, and his letters of congratulation or commemoration were engrossed in copperplate handwriting, with superscription and initial words in German text in gold and colors. I have one before me now, dated February 3, 1863; it is addressed "Augustin Daly," in resplendent characters, followed by "Dear Friend," and begins: "Leah [in blue and gold] may be considered the vanguard of a new dramatic era." He was the devoted husband of the beautiful Madame Methua-Scheller.

Methua predicted that all the translators and adapters would be turning their eyes to the German, now that Mr. Daly had revealed the mine. There were some attempts to work the "find," but they languished. It was left to my brother twenty years after to reopen it successfully with the German comedies. Mosenthal's "Deborah" was now done into English by a great number of translators and sold everywhere; but as those productions were very different from the Daly version and could

not be played under the name of "Leah," they found no market. But to return to the account of a voyage down the Father of Waters in war times :

"On the Mississippi, Oct. 30, 1864.

We have had an eventful passage. We have struck snags, have run on bars and gotten off again, and we have been fired into by guerillas. This last 'item' transpired today while we were at dinner. The shots — about a dozen — came from a masked battery — and although we had an entire regiment of U. S. soldiers on board there was not a musket to reply. No injury was done — as the boat is a pretty fast one and took to her heels for safety. So you see I am in the midst of the War. But I assure you everything looks uglier in print than in reality. For instance there are more misses than hits in these skirmishes. It is one thing to fire — another to shoot. It is only in cases of real downright carelessness that positive injury is sustained. A steamer which reached Cairo just as we were leaving had been boarded by guerillas and several folks shot, but this was because she stopped against all reason at a deserted point on the river to take in cotton. The cotton was the bait in a trap."

"On board the Louisville, Cairo & Memphis U. S. Mail Line  
Steamer St. Patrick, Geo. O. Hart, Master, I. L. Frisbie,  
Clerk.

Thursday, Novr. 3rd, 1864.

On Monday the boat ran on a terrible sandbar about 80 miles above Memphis and then stuck for sixty hours and still sticks. She is loaded down with freight and draws  $7\frac{1}{2}$  feet of water and there is only  $5\frac{1}{2}$  feet where she lies. I and a number of passengers becoming disgusted got the Captain to hail a passing boat and put us on her, and today I stand a fine chance (guerillas and God willing) of being in Memphis after an eight days' trip. . . . .

I did not write you while in Cairo. . . . . It is without exception the filthiest hole in existence. It is the end of the world. The tail of creation. The finis of the sphere. The dirt-box of



this globe. It is built on a morass with a high embankment in front of it on the river side to save it from being wiped away from the map in an overflow. This, however, does not save it from being constantly inundated, as the 'body' of the town is far below the water, with wooden bridges for foot passengers, and only on three or four can horses travel. Pigs, cows, hens and horses run loose in the alleys and lanes. Every thoroughfare is a garbage box. All the houses are built on foundations 20 feet high and with no cellars or basements. All stores are variety stores. The telegraph man, even, keeps a grocery and the postmaster has a news stand. (I wonder if mailed newspapers are delivered regularly or safely there?) And yet fortunes are made there. I hear of one man who has cleared \$125,000 and who came there three years ago as porter to a 'drygoodery.' The newspapers (there are two) talk of 'our growing city' and its future as they have been talking the last 25 years. Ah Allah! but Cairo is one of the places!"

The disorder caused by war was fatal to any attempt at good "housekeeping" on the part of municipal authorities. One coming to the city of New York from abroad in 1864 would have seen parks turned into camps, and squares littered with unsightly wooden shanties. It was because the City Hall Park was so defaced for years that the public made no protest against the sale of the lower end of it to the Federal Government as a site for the post-office — the worst mistake ever made by the authorities of the then misgoverned city.

"Memphis, Nov. 6, '64.

Dear Josey,

As you see I have at last reached here. . . .

We must have had a *Jonah* on board the entire way; for in coming from St. Louis first on the 'Julia' we were grounded twice, and took two days to make a 20 hours' trip. Then we were transferred at Cairo to the 'Mississippi,' a monstrous palace of a boat, and left the town in her on Sunday. Monday

morning we 'grounded' and stuck till Tuesday noon, when we were dragged off the bar by an amiable but rival S. B. An hour after, we struck another and a much worse bar, and on that the boat remained in the most stubborn manner for three days; those of the passengers who were compelled to be in Memphis or New Orleans were transferred to the St. Patrick (Howly boat!) but hardly had we got off on her than she grounded . . . got off the next morning, but soon after in rough water and striking a snag she unshipped her rudder, and had it not been for a gunboat which came in sight and took us in tow the good St. Patrick would never have got to Memphis.

The passengers were all staid, moral and upright people. They were all of the church. Very little smoking and chewing and no tippling. The barman was in despair. He was almost ready to give away his drynkkes to anybody who would take them, only to keep his hand in. Even the 'sailors' were moral. I didn't hear a swear sworn by any of 'em. Not even a little d—. The Captain too was the mildest sort of man. I became so impressed that I was becoming 'a chosen children' myself, and would have joined the tabernacle of grace if I had remained off shore a day longer. One old cove to whom I was relating an 'experience' or two of my travels, deceived by my churchly manner wanted to know if I was on a journey in the missionary interest! When I told him that I was not, but on a tour in the interest of the drama, he gave a spasmodic shudder and fled to the secret recesses of his berth to pray for my sinful, depraved and lost soul.

The immoralities of the town however make up for the sainted character of the boat and its passengers. Such wild devils, such drinkers, such smokers, chewers, such gamblers and uproarious fellows generally I never saw. . . . I am on the war-path to conquer or die. The newspapers received me very kindly. Here is a sample: (Clipping) '*Memphis Bulletin*. By James B. Bingham. Largest City circulation. Largest circulation of any paper in West Tennessee. The circulation of the Daily Bulletin is double that of all the City press com-

bined. *Personal.* We had the pleasure yesterday of taking by the hand Augustin Daly Esqr., the talented literary and dramatic editor of the New York Daily Express and Sunday Courier who is on a brief visit of business to our City. Mr. Daly's character embraces all the qualities of a scholar and gentleman. We extend to him the freedom of our sanctum.' "

Enclosed was Augustin's Federal permit :

*"HEADQUARTERS, DISTRICT OF MEMPHIS*

Memphis, Tenn. Nov. 7, 1864.

Permission is hereby granted A. Daly, Esqr. Citizen of N. Y. to remain in the City Ten (10) days, he will not be molested by the Militia Patrols.

By order of  
Brig. Genl. Buckland.  
Alf. G. Wither  
Capt. 8 a.a.a. Gd."

"Memphis, Nov. 12, '64.

By the way, let me prepare you at once, for anything may happen. There are rumors, plenty, of the approach of the Confederates to this place. A bit of news not known and which you may publish as reliable is that Beauregard is in command of Western Tennessee forces and is going to have Columbus and Memphis in order to blockade the Mississippi. Hood will work for Nashville and Bowling Green, and so the old 'rebel' line will be restored ! This is the plan, and I have it from Forrest's old friend and surgeon. The other day in the capture, on the Tennessee river, of gunboats, 5,000,000 of greenbacks were taken — the pay of Sherman's army for 8 months. This is kept tremendously still, but gold has taken a step on it.

If Memphis is taken I shall be quite safe, from my intimate acquaintance with the Secesh powers (in private) here; or if it is held I shall be equally safe, from my friendliness with the other powers. So be easy, my boy. You can write to me from N. Y. up to the 24, your last letter leaving that day.

By the way, write to Keller and threaten him *horribly*."

“Memphis, Nov. 13, '64.

As you can judge and as you have learned by this time I have not been captured, shot or imprisoned, so your queries on those heads are answered. I have to have a permit from Headquarters to walk about the City, though, and exempt me from arrest and imprisonment for ‘desertion’ from the Militia duty of the place. In such good odor am I with the authorities, though, that I could get a dozen permits if I needed them. I am almost like the man in the fable who sat between two stools — only in this instance the Federal officers seek me, while it is I who seek the Confederates — of whom there are a number in town in disguise. I introduced a Rebel Captain to Miss Jones the other evening and we had quite a treasonable feast of ‘reason’ together. He is one of the most noted guerilla leaders of the west.

On Friday night I had my first taste of ‘war.’ You must know that everybody belongs to the militia here. No resident is exempt. They drill every week and all the stores are closed that day to let every one turn out — white and black. When danger to the town is apprehended and these soldiers are needed the signal given for assembling is four reports of cannon and the ringing of all the bells. Then all have to seize their muskets and trot to rendezvous. Well, Friday evening about 9½ o’clock, and while the performance was going on to the biggest and most fashionable audience ever in the theatre since it was built, the four cannon were heard and the bells commenced to ring. Lord! You never saw such a lot of scared people in your life as the men were. They started for the door pell-mell. Forrest had been reported within 20 miles of Memphis for six days and all thought he had come in at last. The darkies were the most scared of all. You know he has threatened to hang every ‘nigger’ he catches. I addressed them myself. I told them there was nothing the matter, that those shots were only fired in honor of another victory of Sheridan in the Shenandoah. But it was no good. I only had my lie for my pains. ‘Dat’s all berry well, bress yer soul, Massa,’ said one old codfish, ‘but what for dem dere bells ringin’?’ and off he went followed

by the entire gallery. In three minutes we had only an audience of secessionists remaining."

In a few days Daly was at home, not regretting his experiences. He filed away with his correspondence a letter from Avonia's mother to one who must have appeared to her experienced mind an extraordinary person:

"Daly, you are a thoroughly unselfish chap — too much for your own good — it is such a novelty to find one in these shoddy days that I cannot prize you too much. If I could only make you feel you would confer a favor on me by asking me to do something for yourself I should feel less weighed down by gratitude — but you are one of those that always take joy in doing for others, but unwilling others should do for you."

Through many letters, playful, practical, and meditative, from Miss Jones herself to her manager, runs a sentiment that she sums up in one sentence: "It is a great thing to have an earnest disinterested friend. You are the first one I ever had."

Matilda Heron at this time was a very masterful character, making her own engagements and commanding her own plays — one from Daly, referred to in a characteristic letter written on her departure for California:<sup>1</sup>

". . . And how about the play you are getting up for me? Good boy! That's right! Get to work! I hope to be back in June and shall have just nice time to read it over with you, study it and produce it in the autumn. Do not get it into your head to come over to the steamer on Wednesday, for you know how I abhor 'adieux' — They hurt my poor heart and it has enough to carry this very day in leaving husband child and home. Don't forget me quite, good, dear Daly, and be assured of the gratitude with which I shall ever remember you. A Happy New Year and good bye to you.

Matilda Heron Stoepel."

He pursued his profession of playwright with vigor; not hesitating to offer his work to Edwin Booth, E. L. Davenport, J. W. Wallack, Jr., and John S. Clarke, although without result; and Miss Adah Isaacs Menken pressed him to write a drama for her. Nothing that he brought out, however, approached the success of "Leah the Forsaken" until the production of the two plays mentioned in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER VII

First dramatization. "Griffith Gaunt." The grotesque "New York Theatre." Lewis Baker and Mark Smith. Art of dramatizing novels. Daly selects the cast. Rose Eytinge. John K. Mortimer. Their acting. The Courtroom scene. Success of the play. Demand for it. Bowery theatre burns down. The great sensation, "Under the Gaslight." Sensational plays. The Railroad Scene. Incidents of the first night. Nothing could kill it. Familiar characters. Judge Dowling. "Charley" Spencer. Boucicault steals the railroad scene. Injunction against "After Dark." Pirates pay. Hall cannot plead for either side. Burlesque and parodies. Henry Ward Beecher. "Norwood." Miss Jennie Worrell's objection to 'bags.' "Pickwick Papers." Daly's scenario. "A Flash of Lightning." Human documents. Illness. Mrs. Scott Siddons. Marriage to Miss Mary Duff. Writes a "reform" play for the West. Begins to look about for a theatre.

Two respectable actors, Lewis Baker and Mark Smith, were lessees of the "New York Theatre," a grotesque structure on Broadway, opposite Waverly Place, converted from a church after the congregation of the Reverend Samuel Osgood had moved uptown. A. T. Stewart bought the abandoned temple and let it to Miss Lucy Rushton, an English actress, for whom it was fitted up as a theatre. She failed, and was succeeded by Lewis and Baker; who, looking about for attractions, hit upon the idea of a dramatization of the then popular and exciting novel of Charles Reade, "Griffith Gaunt, or Jealousy," and upon Mr. Daly as the man to do the work. The work had to be done in a week. Daly undertook it and did it.

The technical difficulties of making a play out of a novel so as to satisfy those who have read and those who

have not, are enormous. The whole effect of a book which it takes two days or more to read must be condensed into a spectacle not to exceed two and a half hours in length. It must be divided into acts, each of which must have a climax absolutely faithful to the spirit of the original work, but reached by a process of compression, dislocation, and rearrangement, the art of which must be unsuspected by the auditor. In addition, the play so constructed must be one to interest spectators who are *not* acquainted with the book. The scenes must spring naturally from each other in such sequence as to present a coherent and well-rounded work of art, perfect as a drama, as the novel was perfect as a tale. And it must, without the aid of description or explanation, tell its own story and carry its own moral.

Not only was the literary task intrusted to Daly, but also the selection of actors and actresses for his characters, and the rehearsal of his scenes. His genius for stage direction was thus early felt by old professionals. The rapidity and directness with which he accomplished the dramatization demonstrated a special gift for arrangement with reference to theatrical effect which he was afterwards to display with the plays of Shakespeare and of the older dramatists. As to the cast, he engaged John K. Mortimer, who possessed a voice of singular sweetness, for *Griffith Gaunt*, and Rose Eytinge for *Kate Peyton*. That young actress was under a cloud, having abruptly broken a New York engagement a few years before. She was a dark-skinned, black-eyed beauty, resolute and uncontrollable. At Daly's request she now returned to the stage. She, too, possessed a voice of more than ordinary music — not only “an excellent thing in woman” but indispensable to complete success on the stage. Those familiar with the story will remember the



incident when to the despairing and disinherited lover the new heiress, who once rejected him because of fear of his passionate jealousy, now comes full of pity and re-kindled love to comfort him; and to his half-hopeful cry, "What, Kate! Poor me—is it possible that you would marry me?" answers with indescribable archness: "How can I tell till I'm asked!" It is possible that the human voice in man and woman may have been so moving on the mimic stage before, but the effect of that occasion upon a crowded house has surely never been surpassed. From this scene to the end interest increased in the lovers, who, speedily becoming husband and wife, are as speedily estranged by his jealousy, and are only reunited after poor Kate has been tried for her life on the charge of compassing her husband's death; she is saved by his bodily apparition at the last moment in the court-room, where he is welcomed by the ringing voice of the *Chief Justice*, "Sir, I am glad to see you."

The critical appreciation of this play by the leading journals was marked: "A marvel of dramatic construction. The whole story, without the omission of a single important incident, is enacted in three hours, and every point of the novel is brought out with startling force. The impression left upon the auditor after seeing 'Griffith Gaunt' is like to that which remained after witnessing the same author's other play, 'Leah the Forsaken,' that mixture of sadness and satisfaction, of pain and pleasure, which convinces us we have seen a page from nature and read a story of human life, human passions and fears."<sup>1</sup> The trial scene in the last act, the culmination of sustained and painful interest, was conceded to be one of the most impressive of the kind up to that time. The unhappy prisoner is heard pleading her cause and examining her

witnesses in person, the rules of the court in those days not permitting the indulgence of full counsel to the accused.

Mr. Charles Reade was told by Mr. H. D. Palmer of the success of this dramatization, and he expressed a wish to read it. Applications for it came from all quarters. The new Bowery Theatre was burned down at five o'clock in the afternoon of the day it was to be played there.<sup>1</sup> Miss Rachel Denvil was to play *Kate* and William H. Whalley *Griffith*.

The dramatic critics of the period were so cordial in their praise of Daly's clever work that he could think of no better return than to devote the profits of the play to a dinner, at which they were all without exception his guests.

Within a year or two the lease of the New York Theatre passed to one William Worrell, formerly a circus acrobat or clown, who had saved money, and with the aid of a good wife had reared three daughters—Sophia, Irene, and Jennie—for the stage. Mr. Daly, having the scheme of a new sensational play in his head, offered to hire the theatre for a summer season. Even at the present day a New York manager would yield at least half the gross receipts for such an enterprise (in which he took no risk); but the shrewd old circus man, seeing the enthusiasm of young Daly, offered him a quarter of the gross and it was accepted.

The play Daly had in mind was to be called "Under the Gaslight," and was destined to become immediately famous and to hold the stage from that time to the present, to be imitated even by Boucicault, the master of stage sensation, and to be played in every country under various disguises. As we walked home one night, discussing the

<sup>1</sup> Dec. 18, 1866.

need of a culminating incident, my brother said: "I have got the sensation we want — a man fastened to a railroad track and rescued just as the train reaches the spot!"

The class of plays presenting some feature of physical peril and rescue were familiar, and usually called in disparagement the "sensational drama" — as if every great play were not in one sense a sensational drama. The murder of Cæsar and the harangue of Antony to the mob are colossal sensations, as is the Ghost in "Hamlet" and the play within the play, and, above all, the scene of the attempted mutilation of little Arthur in "King John." The screen scene in "The School for Scandal" is one of the greatest of sensations. Without some episode to hold the spectator in breathless suspense no drama can be successful. Whether the effect be produced with or without the aid of scenic adjuncts and of action is not important. With regard to this new play, the effect was wrought by moral agencies which were potent without the climax of the visible railroad train.

On the first night<sup>1</sup> the audience was breathless. In spite of many drawbacks, — the insufficiency of the stage, the nervousness of the stage hands, and all the accidents of a first performance, — the play gained its decisive victory. The intensely wrought feelings of the spectators found vent in almost hysterical laughter when the "railroad train" parted in the middle and disclosed the flying legs of the human motor who was propelling the first half of the express. Had the effect of the scene depended not upon the suspense and emotion created by the whole situation, but upon the machinery, the piece had been irretrievably lost; but the real sensation was beyond chance of accident. It became the town talk. The houses were thronged. An old theatre-goer who

stood up in the rear of the crowded seats turned to those about him after a long-drawn breath and said, "It is the climax of sensation!" So it was, and has so remained. The play was not, however, all sensation. S. Weir Roosevelt (who was prevented by illness from visiting the theatre) read the book, and remarked, "I am glad to see that the literary side has not been neglected." He took a great interest in my brother's progress; at this time he had retired from the active practice of law to devote himself with ardor to the duties of Public School Commissioner.

Again Mr. Daly chose his players wisely: Miss Rose Eytinge (*Laura*), Mortimer (*Smokey*, the soldier messenger), Mrs. Skerrett (*Peachblossom*, a favorite part afterwards with Mrs. John Wood), and Charles T. Parsloe (*Bermudas* the street boy). Daly wanted E. L. Davenport for *Byke*, a sort of New York Bill Sykes, but had to be satisfied with J. B. Studley, who was admirable in it. Another accident of the first night was the rather mellow condition in which Walsh Edwards came on the bench in the courtroom scene as *Judge Bowling* (made up to resemble Judge Dowling) and nearly drove Daly wild with his rambling. Judge Dowling next day was good-humored over the incident.

An account of the extraordinary success of the new play reached the veteran dramatist Boucicault in London, and he immediately appropriated the leading incident and reproduced it in a drama of London life called "After Dark." With singular fatuity Boucicault sold and Jarrett and Palmer bought the piece for America, and notwithstanding the warnings of the American author, whose piece was copyrighted, it was presented at Niblo's Garden. Action for injunction was immediately begun in the Federal Court, and the application for an interim writ

was argued before the late Judge Blatchford. The writ was granted, and the management of Niblo's immediately made terms, paying Daly a royalty for each performance.

Daly wished his friend, A. Oakey Hall (then district attorney), to undertake the case on his behalf, but the following note explained why he was compelled to refuse:

"My dear Daly

Can't. Palmer has been my client, — you have been. I wouldn't act for him against you — I couldn't act against him for you.

Daly & nightly Yours  
by Gaslight & Otherwise  
O. K. H."

The choice of counsel being then left to me, I immediately selected the late William Tracy, and upon his advice retained an advocate of marked literary attainments, little known in New York, who had lately come to our Bar from Baltimore, where he had an established reputation. This was the late Thomas S. Alexander. A more fortunate selection could not have been made. His clear and impressive discussion of the points of the case prevailed against the skill of experienced theatrical lawyers, W. D. Booth of New York and T. W. Clarke of Boston.

Not only was "Under the Gaslight" played in every city, but for many months the vaudevillists, "sketch artists," variety performers, and minstrel troupes were inventing burlesque "acts" of the railroad scene. These travesties were so many evidences of the wide and strong impression which the new play had made. From the day of its production in 1867 to the present time it has continued to hold the stage as a "Peoples' Play," as our German friends would style it, and has been played perhaps oftener than any other melodrama in the English language.

The Worrell sisters got Mr. Daly to dramatize Henry Ward Beecher's novel "Norwood," then publishing in the *New York Ledger*, for production on their own account. Mr. Robert Bonner, the proprietor of the paper, had tempted Mr. Beecher to make this excursion into a new field. The dramatization was no better than the novel. The only hit was made by the youngest sister, Miss Jennie, as *The Hardscrabble Boy*, and that only after she had vainly expostulated with the author about being put in trousers:

"Boston, Revere House.

Oct. 21, '67.

Mr. Daly,

Dear Sir: I have just received the part, like it very much, with one exception and that is wearing the boy's dress all through the piece. You know that style of dress is not adapted to me but I am willing to play it but am confident I can not do it justice never before attempting one of that kind therefore it will be very difficult. I write in the hope that you will contrive to have me wear a girl's dress in the first part, then wear the bags from the battle scene until the end of the piece. I am certain it will not interfere with the text for I have carefully read the part over. It is very embarrassing for me but if absolutely necessary for it to remain as it is at present I will play it but am not responsible for the consequences. I am honorable you see to tell you before-hand so you will not be disappointed, but if you do me a favor which I shall ever be grateful I shall endeavor to arrange all satisfactory. The girl's dress shall be just as you desire if you will only comply with this request and answer please as soon as convenient you will greatly oblige

Yours

Jennie C. Worrell

Please excuse all haste."

It not being within the range of the adapter's license to put Mr. Beecher's tough little boy into skirts, the

"bags" had to go through the piece, and the *Boy* and *Peter* carried off the honors in their dialogue on the arts of war.

Daly's last work for the same theatre was a dramatization of Dickens' "*Pickwick Papers*."<sup>1</sup> It is safe to say that nearly every playwright of the period had attempted that work. To put it as a whole upon the stage is impossible; and to get all the fun there is in it out of it by any arrangement of scene is one of the most difficult feats of the dramatist's art. It appealed strongly to Daly, and he made an exceedingly amusing play of it, casting George Clarke as *Bob Sawyer* (fearfully made up to double the "scorbutic youth" of Bob's little party), J. B. Studley as *Jingle* (melodramatic actors always take to the part—Henry Irving did afterwards, and was immense in it), Parsloe as *Sam Weller* (and he was excellent), H. C. Ryner as *Pickwick* (a capital makeup), and William Carleton as *Winkle*. Celia Logan was *Arabella Allen* and Jennie Worrell *Mary the housemaid*. To those who have puzzled over the possible arrangement of scenes from the varied and extensive pictures between the covers of the book, I give Mr. Daly's selection in the order presented:

- Act First.      The shooting party and elopement at Wardle's in Dingley Dell.  
                     Scene second. The White Horse Inn and Mr. Samuel Weller.  
                     Scene third. At Mrs. Bardell's, Goswell Street.
- Act Second.    The Marquis of Granby Inn. Mrs. Weller and Mr. Stiggins, the Red-nosed man.  
                     Scene second. The double-bedded room and the adventure of the lady in yellow curl-papers.
- Act Third.      The election and riot at Ipswich.

Scene second. Jingle's adventure at Mayor Nupkins'.

Scene third. The preparation for the trial.

Scene fourth. Mr. Bob Sawyer's little Party.

Act Fourth. The great trial of the breach of promise case, Bardell *versus* Pickwick.

Scene second. The adventure of the Garden Wall.

Scene last. Christmas festivities at Dingley Dell.

Immediately after the production of "Pickwick Papers," work was commenced on a new sensational drama, "A Flash of Lightning," for a summer season at the Broadway Theatre (the little old house near Broome Street, once the scene of Wallack's and Brougham's triumphs, and now managed by Barney Williams). The author was indebted for the chief incident in his last act to the French drama "La Perle Noir," but the plot and characters were wholly original. There were remarkable pictures of the burning of a North River steamboat. An inventor told Mr. Daly he had unknowingly disclosed a source of danger from steamboat furnaces that was commonly overlooked. Going home one night, Mr. Daly heard a boyish voice of wonderful power flooding the night air with "Garibaldi's Hymn" and "Santa Lucia." Tracing the music to a back street, he came upon two little Italian wandering minstrels. With his usual enterprise he added them and their parent to his collection of human documents for his forthcoming play. McKee Rankin and his attractive wife, Kitty Blanchard, had two of the chief parts, with J. K. Mortimer and Miss Blanche Grey.

The press was very kind to the new play. With regard to literary merit it was pronounced "the master production of its author."



Just before the production of his play my brother was seized with an attack of illness which threatened to become dangerous. It began with a succession of violent cramps in the stomach. Although he recovered in an incredibly short time, he was for many years visited with the same symptoms when under great strain of mind or body.

Just after the summer season of 1868 Daly's interest was enlisted on behalf of an interesting newcomer from England. This was Mrs. Scott-Siddons, who came with much social prestige and some fame as a Shakespearian reader, and who had a stage experience of one season. She was said to be a great-niece of the famous Mrs. Siddons, sister of the Kembles, and was a *petite* brunette with beauty, intelligence, refinement, and charm. Her stage voice was a singular one — a sort of musical chant strange to the ear, and into which the lines of but one character, *Rosalind*, seemed to fall agreeably. She was not, however, the realization of Shakespeare's sprightliest maid in all respects, for instead of being "more than common tall" she was considerably less, and could no more convincingly assume "a swashing and a martial outside" than could *Ariel* or *Titania*. In fact she was *Rosalind* played by a sprite. She appeared two weeks in December, 1868, at the New York Theatre in *Rosalind*, *Juliet*, *Lady Teazle*, *Julia* in "The Hunchback," *Katharine*, and *King René's Daughter*.

The year 1869 opened happily with my brother's marriage to Miss Mary Duff. This took place on January 9. His fair and youthful bride was the daughter of Mr. John A. Duff, proprietor of the Olympic Theatre, in which he had installed another son-in-law (Mr. James L. Hayes) as manager, and which was then the most profitable place of amusement in the city. The bride was

brought home to our house, No. 214 West 25th Street, and there my brother's only children were born, — Leonard in 1870 and Francis in 1873.

The work of dramatic writing went on energetically. A version of Sardou's "Nos Bons Villageois" was prepared for Mr. and Mrs. Conway under the title of "Hazardous Ground"; a Polish revolutionary drama, "Sanya, or the Red Ribbon," was written for Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Tiffany, and a sensational play, "The Red Scarf," for Miss Sallie Partington, was produced at the Conways' theatre.

One of the oddest commissions ever received by a playwright was from a citizen from the West who came to New York with a letter of introduction to Mr. Daly from Mr. Mark M. Pomeroy of the *Lacrosse Democrat*. The citizen in question had been engaged in a campaign for municipal reform in his town, and had conceived the ingenious idea of representing the wicked "combine" of the local "boodlers" on the stage. Whether this was an effective plan for causing the wicked to flee is a matter of opinion. "Grafters" have thick skins and laughter often disarms justice. But it was not a bad thought to enlist in the effort for reform all the great agencies of good — the pulpit, press, and stage; and Daly, working on the plot furnished by the amiable reformer, did his utmost to make the villains not only hateful, but ridiculous. His client was delighted, and afterwards wrote that he had been either indicted or sued for damages — I forget which. The play was evidently a go!

Having given hostages to fortune by his marriage, and impelled by his life-long ambition, Augustin determined to acquire a theatre of his own and to put into practice long-considered theories of management. Suddenly the beautiful little theatre in Twenty-fourth Street, which

James Fisk, Jr., had built for John Brougham, came into the market after Brougham had failed as manager, and after a season of opera bouffe, undertaken by Mr. Fisk himself, had begun to languish. To this, the most elegant playhouse in America, Daniel Harkins, who had unbounded faith in his former manager's ability, directed Mr. Daly's attention.



SECOND PERIOD : 1869-1873



## CHAPTER VIII

The Fifth Avenue Theatre and Daly's first season. Lease from James Fisk, Junior. Six weeks' rent in advance. Father-in-law Duff's grim humor. Courage, self-reliance, and ideals. Prospectus. Surprises for press and profession. The new company. Well-known names. Unknown names. Daly breaks with tradition. His own stage director. Opening night. "Play" introduces Agnes Ethel. Its successor, "Dreams," introduces James Lewis. "London Assurance" introduces Fanny Davenport. Uphill work. Undeterred by criticism. "I let tongues wag as they please." Mrs. Scott-Siddons' engagement. E. L. Davenport in *Sir Giles Overreach*. Old Comedies and Daly's Saturday nights the vogue. Olive Logan's "Surf." Last appearance of the veteran George Holland. Effect upon the company of the long struggle. All work, all play, and no decisive hit. Twenty-one new productions in six months, of which eleven were classics of the stage. At last the tide turns.

To James Fisk, Jr., proprietor of the Fifth Avenue Theatre, went the young Augustin to inquire the terms for a lease. Fisk was easily found in the offices of the Erie Railway Company, which with Jay Gould he controlled. He probably had never heard of Daly. In reply to his question "What security can you give?" the answer was "None." "Then," said Fisk, "you must pay six weeks' rent in advance. The rent is twenty-five thousand dollars a year." The financier estimated from experience the lasting powers of the ordinary ambitious manager. Singularly enough, six weeks was the length of time which Mr. Duff had given his son-in-law "to get into the poor-house," as he humorously expressed it when informed of the venture. No one would believe at that time that Daly was not backed by his father-in-law.

The impression in the newspaper and theatrical world was, as one writer expressed it, that "he would not be permitted to fail"; yet it was a fact that this undertaking, like all his prior ones, was without a dream of such aid.

When he returned from his visit to Fisk, he came immediately to talk it over with me, — we had been together in everything, and we must be together in this. His enthusiasm was unbounded: "it was folly to stop and count the cost, much less the risk. The talented and experienced Brougham had failed here, but Brougham had failed in his theatre on Broadway in 1851, and Wallack, who succeeded him, had made a brilliant success. If you pause to consider the chances of failure, you will never accomplish anything. Here was opportunity." There was no dross of material consideration that was not consumed in the flame of his desire to work out his ideals. The next day he waited upon Fisk with a check. The stupefaction of the Erie magnate was noticeable. He looked at the slip of paper for some moments, and then remarked, "This is the first man with money I have ever seen in the theatrical business!" A lease for two years was duly drawn and executed, and the young manager with swelling heart unlocked the doors of the theatre and surveyed the property which was now his own. As he said, "I went upon the stage and felt as one who treads the deck of a ship as its master." His prospectus was startling: "The production of whatever is novel, original, entertaining and unobjectionable, and the revival of whatever is rare and worthy, in the legitimate drama." Considering the reputation of Wallack's, then in its prime, for classic comedy, the intention of the new manager seemed audacious, even reprehensible, in view of possible injury to the old masters in crude attempts to restore them.



His list of engagements added to the wonder. There were E. L. Davenport, a tragic star, but one of the most versatile actors on the boards; William Davidge, a veteran of the old flavor, who never failed to make his appearance in the mixed companies hastily gathered for occasional revivals of old comedy or attempts at modern burlesque, but a reliable standby all the same; George Holland, who had grown so old that he was retired from Wallack's, but not from the affections of the public; J. B. Peck, who had been one of Wallack's young men; D. H. Harkins, who had supported Forrest; and George Clarke, a handsome youth beginning to win favor. On the ladies' side were Mrs. Clara Jennings, formerly leading woman at Wallack's; Mrs. Marie Wilkins from the London stage; Mrs. G. H. Gilbert, fondly remembered as the *Marquise St. Maur* in "Caste" and the Indian schoolmarm in "Pocahontas"; and Mrs. Chanfrau, the beautiful *Esther Eccles*. Among the unknown names were Fanny Davenport and Agnes Ethel. There was another — James Lewis.<sup>1</sup> What Daly was to do with a burlesque performer (he had been last seen as *Lucrezia Borgia*) no one knew. Robert Stoepel, a well-known composer, was to conduct the orchestra. William Saunders, a veteran stage carpenter, was machinist. The scenic artists promised well: James Roberts and Charles Duflocq.

It was apparent at once that the newcomer intended to restore forgotten and discarded personalities as well as to bring forward unfriended youth. It seemed to old professionals that his force covered a wide range, but that there were many "lines" vacant. But here came the sur-

<sup>1</sup> Others were Amy Ames, Roberta Norwood, Marie Longmore, Emilie Kiehl, Emily Lewis, Misses Tyson and Rowland, J. F. Egbert, George Jordan, Jr., F. Chapman, W. Beekman, H. C. Ryner, H. Stewart, J. M. Cooke, and Messrs. Pierce and Beck.

prise. His purpose was to break away from tradition; to free actors from the trammels of "lines" into which they had settled as in a groove. It was with a great wrench that the old favorites were pried out of the rut, but the result was soon a mobile force, adaptable and creative. He astonished his players by throwing them into parts for which they thought they had no fitness. They were one day dejected over their tasks, and the next elated with the success they had achieved. To do this all tradition had to be washed out and all rank levelled. In his engagements there was one rule: "My line," began the veteran, "is—" Mr. Daly interrupted gently: "There is no line in this theatre; you do everything." It was revolutionary but successful. Then the dignity of the profession was secured by impartial rules. The humblest personage had rights equal to the favorites of the public. All could come to the manager with a grievance. From the beginning he got the reputation of an unyielding disciplinarian, but if he was rigid with others, he also sacrificed himself. It was soon seen that no one else could do so much with men and women of the stage as he.

In this first season's company were two young women of whom, as of others, it has been customary to say that Daly found them inexperienced beginners and made them famous actresses. They were Miss Davenport and Miss Ethel. Fanny Vining (or Davenport, when she took her stepfather's name) came of an old theatrical family. She joined the company with Mr. Davenport in her nineteenth year, and notwithstanding her rawness the first part given her was a leading one in old comedy. When she was announced for *Lady Gay Spanker* in "London Assurance," an indignant editor called it New York assurance. Yet she ultimately became the best *Lady Gay* of her time. What Daly saw in her besides dazzling



FANNY DAVENPORT



beauty, splendid presence, and blooming health were confidence and self-possession. They were remarkably tested in another early part — that of *Countess D'Autreval* in "Checkmate, or a Duel in Love," a one-act version of Scribe's "*La Bataille des Dames*," in which she had to be substituted for Mrs. Chanfrau at a few hours' notice and with only one rehearsal. On the first night, owing to an unlucky slip of memory of one of the actors, the lines and business of the play fell into the utmost confusion, and the whole comedy would have been wrecked if Miss Davenport had not with the greatest presence of mind and inspiring force caught up the threads of the dialogue, restored the cues, skilfully interwoven them, and rallied the actors; until, without the audience perceiving the least halt, the performance passed to a triumphant conclusion.

Agnes Ethel, a few years older than Fanny Davenport, was a pupil of Matilda Heron, and was brought out, a few months before Daly engaged her, in the small theatre of the Union League Club, then in Twenty-sixth Street. Her part was *Camille*, of which she was not an ideal representative. What the audience saw was a slender figure, candid eyes, flowing auburn hair, an oval face, and regular features always lit up by an expression of childish appeal. These and a low voice of penetrating quality dwelt in the public memory from the moment she appeared on the Fifth Avenue stage. Her gifts were not varied or marked, but she filled the eye and the ear so completely that no one asked for more.

But the most striking revelation of adaptability was in the modestly announced "Mr. James Lewis." A very young man who had made in a small way some acceptable appearances in brief seasons of burlesque and extravaganza, he was given, in the first two seasons at this theatre, a range of parts in which the ordinary lines of

theatrical business were so crossed and opposed as to bewilder the most experienced professionals of the period. Through the range of low comedy, high comedy, "juveniles," and "first old men" Lewis moved with equal facility. In the first season he played the cheeky young shopman *John Hibbs* in "Dreams," and the mature and eccentric *Baron de Cambri* in "Frou-Frou." In the second season he was the elderly and dignified *Sir Patrick Lundie* in "Man and Wife," and the flighty young *Bob Sackett* in "Saratoga." Between these he was *Marplot* in the "Busybody," *Feste* in "Twelfth Night," and *Major de Boots* — and excellent in all. Tradition was routed in the case of Lewis.

For stage manager the choice fell upon Harkins, an actor of experience, heavy build, and forcible manner, with a voice of remarkable resonance that made his utterance of Shakespeare's lines delightful. He was well read, and possessed an energy and zeal which often required to be kept in check. He was greatly elated over his appointment as stage manager of such a company in such a theatre, and he immediately proceeded to lay down his course with great clearness to his manager: "I tell you my policy, Mr. Daly — when I am on the stage I permit no one to interfere with me." "Just my policy, Harkins," said Mr. Daly smilingly. "When I am on the stage I permit no one to interfere with *me*!" This produced an excellent understanding, which was never interrupted. There was no vanity in this policy of Daly's; he was absolutely free from that weakness. When he took the Fifth Avenue Theatre, the initials of the former manager John Brougham adorned the summit of the proscenium arch, and they were never removed.

One special gift of Daly remains to be noticed — that of prompt decision, which doubles the value of every

other gift. By reason of it men are singled out from the ranks in great industries and put in command. By it professional men achieve in law, in medicine, in the sciences, reputation and fortune. I once said to my brother in discussing his swiftness of decision, "But you make mistakes?" "Yes," he replied, "perhaps in half the cases; but that is the average of the people who stop to weigh every consideration; and I have this advantage over them — I don't lose an opportunity."

The beginning of a new era in American stage history was the night of August 16, 1869, when the Fifth Avenue Theatre was opened "under the management of Augustin Daly" with T. W. Robertson's "Play." This gossamer comedy, presented with all that was delicately harmonious in personages, dress, and scenery, created at once the atmosphere that was henceforth to be familiar in this house. The little Fifth Avenue Theatre, far out of the zone of theatres, was about half filled on that mid-summer night, but the audience was of the kind that never afterwards changed in its appreciation of what was now doing for the elevation of the stage. The bright and happy faces on the stage were those of Agnes Ethel, Mrs. Jennings, Mrs. Gilbert, E. L. Davenport, Holland, Davidge, Clarke, and Polk. Davenport's grand presence lent dignity to the slight part of the *Hon. Bruce Farquhar*, and the alluring presence of Agnes Ethel as *Rosie* captivated the senses.

The same cast presented Robertson's "Dreams" on September 6; James Lewis was now introduced as the commercial traveller *John Hibbs*. All the characters in the play had a descriptive couplet on the programme, and Lewis' was appropriately:

"We meet thee like a pleasant thought  
When such are needed."

In his next part, *Bob* in "Old Heads and Young Hearts," a valet masquerading as a limb of the law, he displayed for the first time his genius for "making up" by giving a startling (and probably accidental) imitation of the crabbed countenance of a well-known New York lawyer of the old school, then still in practice.

Miss Davenport made her début in the next production, "London Assurance." Mr. Davenport's *Sir Harcourt Courtly* was the finest representation of the part ever seen in New York, consummately polished, blasé, arrogant, and infatuated. Miss Davenport played with high spirit and confidence, and was approved by her manager, for she came up to his ideal of the part. It has ruined many a *Lady Gay* to be too sophisticated. Miss Davenport's brusque cajolery was exactly in place. What the critics thought did not change the manager's opinion. He had the indispensable gift of disregarding criticism when he felt he was right. He was not indifferent to it, was indeed extremely sensitive to the mildest censure; yet he was not deterred by it. He adopted as his motto a line from Goethe: "What I have done I have done in a kingly fashion. I let tongues wag as they pleased. That I knew to be right, that I did."

The dainty Mrs. Scott-Siddons was next brought on in a fresh and buoyant production of "Twelfth Night," the first Shakespearian revival of the Daly management. Her *Viola* was supported by Miss Ethel's *Olivia*, Miss Davenport's *Maria*, Harkins' *Orsino*, Davidge's *Sir Toby*, Polk's *Sir Andrew*, Clarke's *Malvolio*, and Lewis' *Clown*.<sup>1</sup> Polk was one of the best and least exaggerated of *Aguecheeks*, and Davidge a perfect *Sir Toby* in manner

<sup>1</sup> Oct. 4, 1869. The remainder of the cast included Chapman as *Fabian*, Ryner as *Antonio*, Egbert as *Sebastian*, Pierce as the *Friar*, Cooke as *Roberto*, Beekman as the *Justice*, Jordan as *Valentine*, and Stewart as *Curio*.



and looks. "As You Like It" followed, and the sing-song of Mrs. Scott-Siddons was like the carol of a bird in the forest of Arden. Mrs. Jennings was *Celia* on the first night, and they exchanged parts from night to night. Young Clarke was a romantic *Orlando*, and Harkins' fine and distinct declamation was enjoyed in *Jaques*. Davidge was the *Touchstone* in those days; Lewis' fine *Jester* was to come with experience.<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Siddons was presented in three other revivals before the termination of her visit: Henrik Hertz' "King René's Daughter,"<sup>2</sup> Cibber's "She Would and She Would Not,"<sup>3</sup> and "Much Ado about Nothing,"<sup>4</sup> the third Shakespearian revival by Daly. Mrs. Scott-Siddons was then in her twenty-fifth year, and full of a demure vitality. Not great in any part, she was charming in everything. Her *Hypolita* in Cibber's play (not seen in New York since 1858) was supported by Clarke's *Don Philip*, Davidge's *Don Manuel*, Harkins' *Don Octavio*, Lewis' *Trapanti*, George Holland's *Diego*, Miss Ethel's *Donna Rosara*, Miss Davenport's *Violetta*, and Miss Longmore's *Flora*. Equally strong was the cast of "Much Ado about Nothing." Mrs. Siddons was, of course, *Beatrice* (rather a spirited child than a woman), Harkins *Benedick*, Polk *Don Pedro*, Egbert *Don John*, F. H. Evans *Claudio*, Clarke *Leonato*, Ryner *Antonio*, Pierce *Balthazar*, Chapman *Borachio*, Stewart *Conrade*, Davidge *Dogberry*, Holland *Ferges*, Beekman *Sexton*, Beneux *Seacoal*, Jordan *Friar Francis*, Miss Ethel *Hero*, Miss Kiehl *Margaret*, and Miss Lewis

<sup>1</sup> The rest of the cast, Oct. 18, 1869, was: *Banished Duke*, Polk; *Duke Frederick*, Cooke; *Amiens*, Stewart; *Oliver*, Jordan; *Jaques de Bois*, Pierce; *Adam*, Ryner; *Charles, the Wrestler*, Peck; *Sylvius*, Egbert; *Corin*, Chapman; *William*, Beekman; and *Audrey*, Mrs. Wilkins.

<sup>2</sup> Oct. 22, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> Oct. 25, 1869.

<sup>4</sup> Nov. 8, 1869.

*Ursula*. During the Siddons season there was a revival of Sheridan Knowles' "Love Chase," to afford Mrs. Wilkins an appearance in *Widow Green*, a part which she had quite made her own in England. She was assisted by Miss Ethel as *Constance*, Davidge as *Fondlove*, Clarke as *Wildrake*, and Harkins as *Waller*; but the comedy proved to be too antiquated to please.<sup>1</sup>

The departure of Mrs. Siddons (upon a theatrical tour) seemed to affect the public, for there was a falling off of patronage at once, although "Caste" was revived<sup>2</sup> to give Mrs. Chanfrau in her lovely portraiture of *Esther Eccles*,<sup>3</sup> and "A New Way to Pay Old Debts" was put on to show a great representation — Davenport's *Sir Giles Overreach*.<sup>4</sup> Then in rapid succession came Palgrave Simpson's "Second Love,"<sup>5</sup> Sterling Coyne's "Everybody's Friend,"<sup>6</sup> and Scribe's "Checkmate" (which has already been noticed). After that came a notable revival, Mrs. Inchbald's "Wives as They Were and Maids as They Are," for the first time in thirty years; then Andrew Halliday's "Daddy Gray," Boucicault's "The Irish Heiress," and Scribe's "Don César de Bazan." In the hope of stimulating the public fancy, an elaborate production of "The Duke's Motto," a brilliant attraction a few years before at Niblo's, was staged; and then Mrs. Centlivre's "Busybody." The last was one of the plays that now began to make Daly's Saturday nights famous. His constant patrons acquired the habit of ending the week at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, but something more was needed to establish the new enterprise.

Some hopes were based upon Mrs. Olive Logan Sikes' "Surf," which was an "up to date" comedy of American

<sup>1</sup> Oct. 22, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> Nov. 15, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> With Miss Davenport as *Polly*, Mrs. Gilbert as *Marquise D'Alroy*, Lewis as *Nerridge*, Polk as *Hawtreys*, and the inimitable *Eccles* of Davidge.

<sup>4</sup> Nov. 22, 1869.

<sup>5</sup> Nov. 22, 1869.

<sup>6</sup> Nov. 25, 1869.

life and had been a success in Boston. But the only eventful episode of its production was the breakdown of poor George Holland. He was cast for *Mr. Jenkins*, a newspaper reporter, and he appeared on the opening night, January 12, 1870, for the last time in any performance. His final appearance in public was to say farewell at the benefit given him at the theatre by Mr. Daly.

As the season wore on the manager began to look for an attraction which would last longer than three weeks and give his company a rest from incessant rehearsals. Twenty-one plays had been produced in six months, and even the mechanics were worn out. When "The Duke's Motto" with its elaborate setting was brought out, old Saunders threw himself exhausted upon a pile of scenery, and had to be comforted by his tireless manager. The continuous change of plays kept the company at rehearsal all day and often after midnight. This was nothing, however, to the young and the young in spirit. Health, hope, buoyancy of heart carried them over all the disappointments. There was always some incident to laugh over, some trifling mishap, some misadventure turned to merriment; then the stage was cleared for another effort, and the feet of youth, which always tread upon air, tripped lightly after their untiring leader, who, as everyone knew, labored longer and harder than any one else, and got no salary, not even his expenses. He came to the theatre in the morning before the night watchman left, and he was the last at night upon whom the key was turned. He spent nothing upon himself. All that came in went upon the stage. The scenery was exquisite, the dresses costly, the furniture real. Everything done on the stage was done admirably, and satisfied the discerning portion of the community that came to see; but the great crowds that make success had not found their way there. So far

## CHAPTER IX

"Frou-Frou" turns the tide. Makes Agnes Ethel. Supper on the hundredth night. "Fernande," and Fanny Morant's great part. The Fifth Avenue Theatre now established. Its social character. Tribute to Daly by Dorman B. Eaton. Rigid rule excluding visitors from the stage. "Man and Wife" dramatized by Daly introduces Clara Morris. She makes her mark, and so do Lewis and Mrs. Gilbert. Agnes Ethel as *Viola* and Knowles' *Julia*. Third success, Bronson Howard's "Saratoga." Miss Morris in farce. Supper on the hundredth night. Boucicault's "Jezebel" and Daly's addition to it. Engagement of Charles Mathews. Breakfast to Mathews. "No Name." Fanny Davenport sacrifices beauty to wit. Outside work. "Horizon" written for the Olympic and Mr. Duff. Daly brings out Madame Janauschek in English. His project to dramatize "The Mystery of Edwin Drood." Charles Collins' opinion. "Divorce" by Daly a record success. "Article 47." Clara Morris reaches the high water mark of her fame. Retirement of Agnes Ethel. Excursion to Philadelphia.

At this time appeared in Paris Meilhac and Halévy's emotional play "Frou-Frou." Their names had been associated with opera bouffe, and a serious play was the last thing expected from them. "Frou-Frou" quite supplanted Dumas' "Dame aux Camélias," but was unlike that morbid tale; it dealt with a life warmed by the sun, in which goodly vines flourish that the little foxes gnaw — in which the small passions make havoc like a tempest. A child-wife, impetuous, spoiled, installing her staid sister by the family hearth as mother to her child and companion to her husband, so that she herself may flit about in freedom; then waking to the bitter reality that she is supplanted: loading the innocent with reproaches: and





AGNES ETHEL.

maddened by the consequences of her own folly, casting herself away — to repent, to return, to die, — such was the story of “Frou-Frou.”

The adaptation was completed in three days, and the play given to the public on the evening of February 12, 1870. In Paris, at the *Gymnase*, Mme. Desclée, an experienced actress of great emotional power, created the part of the heroine; Daly gave it to the novice, Miss Ethel. His judgment was abundantly justified. The naïveté of the beginner gave reality to the thoughtlessness of the character. Dramatic force was wanting, but there was the effect of a searching cry from a weak and despairing heart. The forgiveness of the husband had the full sympathy of the beholders, who found themselves like him contemplating a creature blown about by the wind, whose feet were never made to wear out the everlasting flint.<sup>1</sup> The play was an unquestioned success. It became the town talk, and everybody crowded to the Fifth Avenue Theatre. Daly had justified prediction. James Fisk, Jr. looked as if he felt that his sagacity in leasing the theatre to the untried manager had been vindicated, and even old Mr. Duff wore a sort of “I told you so” expression.

To celebrate the hundredth performance Daly gave a supper at the St. James Hotel, at which the whole company of the theatre was present, together with Judge John R. Brady (presiding), Richard O’Gorman, Judge Fithian, Lawrence Jerome, and Mayor Hall. After the run of “Frou-Frou” there was a brief revival of Goldsmith’s

<sup>1</sup> The cast was excellent. Young Clarke was *Sartorys*, the husband; Kate Newton (her début) *Louise*, the sister; Davidge, the frivolous parent *Brigard*; Lewis and Mrs. Gilbert *Baron* and *Baroness de Cambri*; the child of Frou-Frou was little Gertrude, daughter of Roberta Norwood; Miss Davenport consented to play the maid, *Pauline*. — a great sacrifice for *Lady Gay* and the *Baroness*

“Good-natured Man”;<sup>1</sup> and then Sardou’s “Fernande,” another Parisian novelty, was brought out<sup>2</sup> with the same artists, and with the addition of Miss Fanny Morant, whose powerful impersonation of *Clothilde*, the woman scorned who became a fury, was magnetic in the highest degree. The new play terminated the season,—one of forty-eight weeks, and unsurpassed in a theatre devoted to legitimate entertainment.

The ambition of the manager had been fulfilled. He had established a theatre where plays new and old could be fittingly presented, and to which young and old could resort with confidence. The home-like atmosphere remained with Daly’s Theatre throughout his career. A rigid rule of the manager was that no person was to be admitted behind the scenes who was not engaged in the business of the stage. When his lease came to be renewed the following year, his landlord proposed a clause giving the lessor “free access to all parts of the theatre at all times.” Daly refused, and the clause was omitted.

The Fifth Avenue Theatre and Daly’s reputation as manager were now established. The popularity of his company in the eyes of other managers was attested by the successful efforts of Wallack to withdraw George Clarke from it. But this defection was only for one season. He soon returned.

Plays were offered by well-known writers: one was a drama by Bret Harte; and Laura Keane was anxious to come and play a new local piece in a theatre managed by “an American author brim full of genius.” But Daly’s energies were now bent upon a congenial task—the dramatization of the great novel of the period, Wilkie Collins’ “Man and Wife”; Collins himself had attempted the task for the London stage, but had failed completely.



The work presented enormous difficulties. In the last act, incidents which take up six weeks of time and many changes of locality had to be crowded into a single scene and half an hour. It was the opening piece of the next season,<sup>1</sup> and gave Miss Clara Morris her first opportunity.

Miss Morris and her mother had come from the West with letters to New York managers. Mr. Daly was the only one to give the friendless stranger a chance. Impressed at first by her vivacity, he mentally enrolled her in his comic forces; but when, to his astonishment, Miss Ethel refused the part of *Anne Sylvester* in "Man and Wife," he recalled the mobile countenance and impressive voice of Miss Morris, and intrusted that leading rôle to her. The result was that the first night of the new play presented to a deeply interested audience another of Mr. Daly's discoveries. But Miss Morris was but one of several surprises of that eventful première. Lewis, the farceur, was the dignified, keen, and benevolent *Sir Patrick Lundie*, and immediately became a favorite. This was one of Daly's most daring defiances to theatrical rules — to give the low comedian a rôle naturally falling to the "first old man" or the "père noble." The third surprise was the appearance of the aristocratic dowager, Mrs. Gilbert, in the weird part of the pretended dumb woman, *Hester Dethridge*. It was a night of triumph for the management.

After ten weeks' run a season of old comedy and Shakespeare followed. No one now doubted the capacity of the new theatre for a brilliant and unconventional interpretation of the classics. In "Twelfth Night" Miss Ethel was *Viola*,<sup>2</sup> and in "The Hunchback" *Julia*.<sup>3</sup> "The Heir at Law" introduced Mrs. William Winter to the stage.<sup>4</sup> Davidge was *Sir Harcourt Courtly* in a revival of

"London Assurance," and *Malvolio* in "Twelfth Night." A one-time favorite, Ione Burke, was added to the company and played *Grace Harkaway* in the style of an ingénue and with the experience of some years in England. Then Mr. Daly had the pleasure of giving a young American author his opportunity.

Bronson Howard had written to Mr. Daly a year before, asking him to read a new comedy which had had a test performance in Louisville under J. W. Albaugh, who had praised it highly. Daly read it and made several suggestions to Howard, who was quick to appreciate their value and able to make the best use of them. With "Saratoga" he at length gave to the stage one of the liveliest and freshest comedies of the period. Miss Morris shone in a comedy part as conspicuously as in that deadly earnest one of *Anne Sylvester*. The manager's first as well as his second estimate of her abilities was correct. And now Lewis was back again in farce, rattling, in *Bob Sackett*, through a wilderness of scrapes; *Bob Sackett* is the hero of "Saratoga." Delighted with Howard's success, Daly gave him a supper on the hundredth night, at which Mayor Hall presided, assisted by Robert B. Roosevelt (then member of Congress from New York), John Brougham, Colonel Knox, Joseph Howard, Jr., many representatives of the press, and the whole company of Daly's Theatre.

After the long run of Howard's play, Boucicault's "Jezebel" (from the French of Lessière's "La Fille du Sud") was produced, and to lighten its gloom Daly wrote a comic scene for it, which the press (not in the author's confidence) pronounced to be "in Boucicault's best vein"! The next novelty was a season of Charles Mathews after an absence of years. Mathews was one of the bright recollections of Daly's boyhood. His country

years were only disclosed by his wrinkles, his step and spirit were young, and he walked jauntily to rehearsals in the morning, smoking the longest, strongest, brownest, and most highly flavored of Regalias. He had been thirty-five years on the stage, which he adopted only in middle life, having been intended by his father, the famous comedian, for the profession of architect. In the preceding season in England he had toured nine months, playing in forty-one one-night stands and in thirty-one places for two nights each. He now turned up as gay as ever for his third visit to America, accompanied by his wife, Lizzie Weston of New York, whose first husband was Adolphus Davenport.

Mathews' opening bill<sup>1</sup> was (as always) "Married for Money" and "Patter *vs.* Clatter," and he wrote from San Francisco in advance, referring to terms (half the receipts after \$500), describing the dramatis personæ of the first piece (which Daly knew by heart) and how to cast it (which Daly also knew as well as he did), and begging that he be announced "as 'Mr. C. M., the celebrated (or distinguished) English comedian,'—nothing more. And I have a horror of 'gags' (which, by the bye, I believe you have the good taste to avoid also)." The new manager's principles in the latter regard had already become the talk of the theatrical world. "Gags" are those interpolations with which privileged comic actors enliven the author's composition.

Mrs. Gilbert was *Mrs. Mopus* to Mathews' *Mopus*, and Miss Kate Claxton, now a member of the company, was one of the mute performers in the second piece, in which the star did all the talking. He played eight weeks in eleven pieces, including "A Bachelor of Arts" and "Used Up" (favorites of Lester Wallack); and the gossamer

daintiness of the first made even the lightest light comedy of the other seem ponderous; yet both were perfect. Mrs. Mathews appeared, for the first time in New York since she had become Mrs. Mathews, as *Medea* in Planché's extravaganza of that name — no longer the slender *Naiad Queen*. Mathews was *Chorus* crowned with bays, in a short white toga over evening dress. He was a martinet at rehearsals, going through his own lines in a whisper, but advising "a judicious application of the toasting fork to all the dram. pers."

Mayor Hall gave a breakfast to Mathews at the Manhattan Club at which Sunset Cox, Evert Duyckinck, James W. Gerard (one of the leaders of the Bar), Chief Justice Charles P. Daly, managers Wallack and Augustin Daly, Lester Wallack, John Gilbert, and Brougham were present. The Chief Justice asked Wallack if he had ever met the celebrated Irish comedian, Jack Johnstone. "Yes," said Wallack, "I married his daughter; and there [pointing to Lester] is her son." Brougham sat next to me, and the conversation in a little while turned upon spiritual manifestations. Brougham asked me if I believed that at any time in the history of mankind the spirits of the departed had ever appeared to the living. "I have lain awake," he said, "in my bed at night many a time and have stretched out my hand in the darkness, saying, 'If there is such a thing as a disembodied spirit, let it make me sensible of its presence by touching my hand!' And there was no response."

No one could ever have been a greater stage favorite than Brougham. From the time of his first appearance in New York in 1842 until his death in 1880 he was continually before the public. Some years after the Mathews' breakfast, and when the veteran Brougham was afflicted

arranged for him which netted about \$10,000. It was invested in an annuity which he enjoyed only two years, when he was taken away "in the next shipment of souls." He wrote more than fifty plays — among them dramatizations of the early works of Dickens — and innumerable songs and ballads introduced into the works of others. Taken all in all he was the most agreeable actor of his time, and one of the most intelligent. His *Sir Lucius O'Trigger* was a revelation. At the close of Mathews' engagement he played Sheridan's "Critic" in two acts, so as to show his *Sir Fretful Plagiary* as well as his *Puff*, making the change of costume — from the rubicund, powdered, gartered, choleric knight to the cool, well-groomed dramatist — in an incredibly short time, I should think not over half a minute.

After Mathews, Wilkie Collins' and Daly's adaptation of "No Name" was brought out<sup>1</sup> with all the company in the cast, and with Miss Davenport masking her glowing beauty in the rôle of the frowsy, chalk-faced, slipshod and half-cracked *Mrs. Captain Wragge*. "Delmonico's," an adaptation from Sardou, came next,<sup>2</sup> and finally, as late as July 10 (another prolonged season, but there was no Manhattan Beach in those days, the public taking their ease in summer gardens, listening to Theodore Thomas' orchestra) "An Old Olympic Bill" was given, such a night's frolic as William Mitchell used to offer his patrons twenty years before, at the toy theatre on Broadway below Grand Street. One of his greatest hits was the *Crummles* episode from "Nicholas Nickleby." Daly now reproduced it from the original Mss. Davidge was *Crummles*, Mrs. Gilbert *The Infant Phenomenon*, and James Lewis *The Savage*. Mrs. Gilbert's ballet was inimitable. On July 15, 1871, after a season of three hun-

dred and fifteen performances, the company was allowed to rest.

If we fancy that the work of this season afforded all the employment needed for the energies of the manager and dramatist, we shall be surprised to learn that he wrote, rehearsed, and produced<sup>1</sup> for his father-in-law, Mr. Duff, at the Olympic Theatre an original American drama, "Horizon," lending Agnes Ethel for the heroine *Meddie*, who, as fair and frail as a lily, handled a rifle and kept a score of savages at bay. This was in the third act, the climax of which was the startling ruse by which the Indians captured the stockade in which the families of the settlers were gathered. The drama was a picture of life on the border and the plains. A. M. Palmer said to me years afterwards: "'Horizon' was the best American play I have ever seen; more than that, it was the best play your brother ever wrote; and it was the least appreciated by the public." G. L. Fox, J. K. Mortimer, Charles Wheatleigh, Hart Conway, Mrs. Prior and her daughter Lulu, Mrs. Yeamans and her daughter Jennie, with many others, were in the cast.

Daly wrote this play to help the fading fortunes of the once popular Olympic Theatre, which Fox in "Humpty Dumpty" had crowded for two years, but which the receding stream of population was now leaving high and dry. Duff had invested a huge sum in the purchase of the decree of foreclosure which cut off the builder Trimble; but through some oversight final judgment was not entered, and when the property became exceedingly valuable in Duff's hands, the creditors of Trimble (revived by an astute attorney) were allowed to redeem, and Duff had to account for the profits. Only once after this did Daly produce a play on the Olympic stage. This was in 1879, and the

play "L'Assommoir," when Miss Rehan, a beginner, came to his management.

Daly's fame now brought him<sup>1</sup> from Mr. Thomas Carnegie an offer (which he had to decline) to manage a new opera house, or theatre, at Pittsburgh. A congenial task for him this year was to take charge of Madame Janauschek's début in English. This was at the Academy of Music, in Mosenthal's "Deborah" and in "Macbeth." The company he selected for her comprised Frederic Robinson, Mark Smith, A. H. Davenport, Mrs. DeVere, Mme. Lesderniers, and Miss Ames.

Still another project was to compose and produce a dramatization of the lamented Dickens' unfinished "Mystery of Edwin Drood." Assuming that the author must have left some clue to the "mystery," our playwright wrote to young Charles Dickens, who stated in reply that it was as great a mystery to him as to the public at large. Daly wrote to Mr. Luke Fildes, the illustrator of the novel, and Mr. Fildes referred him to Mr. Charles Collins, the artist (son-in-law of the author), who had designed the cover. Mr. Collins obligingly replied :

"Brompton, May 4, 1871.

Dear Sir : —

The late Mr. Dickens communicated to me some general outlines for his scheme of 'Edwin Drood,' but it was at a very early stage in the development of the idea, and what he said bore mainly upon the earlier portions of the tale.

Edwin Drood *was never to reappear*, he having been murdered by Jasper. The girl Rosa not having been really attached to Edwin, was not to lament his loss very long, and was, I believe, to admit the sailor Mr. Tartar to supply his place. It was intended that Jasper himself should urge on the search after Edwin Drood and the pursuit of his murderer, thus endeavoring to direct

suspicion from himself, the real murderer. This is indicated in the design, on the right side of the cover, of the figures hurrying up the spiral staircase emblematical of a pursuit. They are led on by Jasper who points unconsciously to his own figure in the drawing at the head of the title. The female figure at the left of the cover reading the placard 'Lost' is only intended to illustrate the doubt entertained by Rosa Budd as to the fate of her lover Drood. The group beneath it indicates the acceptance of another suitor.

As to any theory further it must be purely conjectural. It seems likely that Rosa would marry Mr. Tartar and possible that the same destiny might await Mr. Crisparkle and Helena Landless. Young Landless himself was to die perhaps, and Jasper certainly would, though whether by falling into the hands of justice or by suicide or through taking an overdose of opium, which seems most likely, it is impossible to say.

I regret not being able to offer you more information and also that your letter should have remained so long unanswered.

Very faithfully yours,

Charles Allston Collins."

Disappointed in his search for authentic matter to supply a conclusion for the unfinished work, Daly considered the possibility of inventing one himself. His theory was that the conscience of Jasper might induce him to betray himself in sleep. At that period the French drama, "Le Juif Polonais" (which Henry Irving afterwards brought out under the name of "The Bells"), had just been produced, and the dream scene of the second act suggested a nightmare to result in a confession by the culprit. The work, being laid aside for the moment, was not taken up after the production of "The Bells." The manager had become engaged upon one of his most celebrated original plays, with which he decided to open his third season. This was "Dixie" the first American



drama on the subject. When the dissolution of the marriage bond was legalized in France, the dramatic authors there appreciated the value of the new conditions for theatrical purposes, chiefly in the humorous way. But it was a serious subject to America, and the scheme of this play was to show that marital disagreements usually begin with self-love and pride, and that they grow out of unions where each party marries for his or her own happiness and forgets the other's; and to impress the idea that forbearance is the religion of matrimony as well as of society.

Anthony Trollope's "He Knew He Was Right" suggested the common case of a man unreasonably jealous and a woman unreasonably resentful; but apart from these traits, Daly could claim the play, with its well-contrasted characters (of whom there were twenty-one), its novel incidents, intense dialogue, and admirable dénouement, as all his own. Two ill-assorted couples were shown. Miss Morris and Harkins represented a high-strung woman united to a man who denied her the least freedom of will; and Miss Davenport and Davidge, a mating of May and December. Dominating the sea of trouble was the "divorce lawyer" *Jitt* (Lewis), and his coadjutor was necessarily the despicable divorce detective (W. J. Lemoyne). The worldly mother and matchmaker was Miss Fanny Morant. Necessary to the story was the alienist (DeVere), of whom a well-known physician said, "I'm delighted to see on the stage at last a character that does not belie the profession!" Minor parts fell to Mrs. Gilbert, Mary Cary, Ida Yereance, Linda Dietz, Louise Vollmer, Kate Claxton, Nellie Mortimer, David Whiting, Henry Crisp, and Owen Fawcett.

The first representation<sup>1</sup> showed that the play exactly

suited the temper of the public. It did not preach, it acted, its moral. The causes of trouble lay on the surface of everyday life. The whole play was an appeal to reason, to fairness, to justice. The appeal went straight home. The veteran actor John Gilbert was there on the first night. He went back to Wallack's and said: "They have a strong play up there!" It is not surprising that it was played two hundred times (a record), and, before the season ended, all over the United States.

The devotion of the manager to the older comedy prompted the revival of "The Provoked Husband."<sup>1</sup> Miss Davenport was *Lady Townly*, Mrs. Gilbert *Lady Wronghead*, Miss Cary *Lady Grace*, and Miss Claxton *Trusty*; Louis James was *Manly* and Lemoyne *Moody*. A week was given to Miss Ethel in *Frou-Frou* and *Viola*; then came the greatest sensation of the management, "Article 47."

In this play Miss Morris reached the height of her achievement. The scene in which, baffled of her vengeance, which had become a monomania, her overwrought emotion unseats her reason and she passes through the stages of fear, cunning, and loss of control to raving madness was electrifying; and when the curtain fell, she was the mistress of the American stage. This triumph had not been effected without extreme preparation. Long rehearsals with her ambitious and painstaking manager had shaped every movement and guided every inflection. Their joy was mutual. The brilliancy of the cast, the setting, the surroundings, made this victory look as if it had been foreseen and staged. Miss Davenport, Mrs. Gilbert, Misses Dietz, Norwood, Vollmer, and Yercance, Messrs. Crisp, Davidge, James, Lewis, Griffiths, Lemoyne, Parker, Haskins, DeVane, and Bennett were in



CLARA MORRIS



the triumph. The season closed<sup>1</sup> when "Article 47" was well on to its hundredth night.

The successes achieved by plays in which she had no part caused Miss Ethel to leave Daly's management and engage with Shook and Palmer of the Union Square, who had watched the course of the Fifth Avenue Theatre with appreciative eyes. Daly would gladly have retained Miss Ethel with the expectation of fitting her delicate and limited gifts with suitable parts. He had sent her with a special company through the country to star in "Frou-Frou" and "Divorce," and he offered her a three years' engagement. She was weighing this when Shook and Palmer made her an offer to get a play for her from Sardou and revive the interest of the "Frou-Frou" days. The scheme was greatly helped by Harkins being now willing to leave Daly (Clarke was coming back) and serve the Union Square as stage manager with all the experience acquired at the Fifth Avenue. It may briefly be said that Miss Ethel's acceptance was wise, and Shook and Palmer's venture successful. Sardou made over one of his plays ("Andrea"), and called it "Agnes," in which Miss Ethel made a decided hit; after one season she retired to marry.

During the latter part of the run of "Article 47" Miss Davenport was also fitted out with a company to star in "Divorce," taking Miss Morris' part, *Fanny Ten Eyck*. Lawrence Barrett wrote from his theatre in New Orleans: "She is certainly as sound in sentiment as she is airy and charming in comedy. She has the best of her parent stock in her composition." There was another starring tour, brief and eccentric, the first of its kind: during the run of "Divorce" at the Fifth Avenue the whole company was carried to Philadelphia to give a matinée (at the

Walnut Street Theatre, I think) and were back in New York in time for the evening performance. The excursion was greatly enjoyed by everybody except James Lewis, who sat gloomily in a corner when he heard that the regular trains on the P. R. R. were to be held on sidings to let the special containing his mortal parts go by. Like nearly every other comic actor Lewis took a serious view of life and the probability of its accidents. He was not seen to smile that day until back safe in Twenty-fourth Street.

The untiring manager had this season found time to assist in benefits for Mrs. Matilda Heron, now sadly in need, and for the young widow of James H. Hackett, who was left with an infant son.

## CHAPTER X

Last of this theatre. Fourth season opens with Bronson Howard's "Diamonds." Old Comedy and Shakespeare take possession. Charles Fisher as *Old Dornton*, *Falstaff*, and *Sir Peter Teazle*. Clara Morris in "The Inconstant." Lewis' aversion to old comedy. Notable casts for "The Merry Wives of Windsor" and "The School for Scandal." Revival of "The Belle's Stratagem" and "The Provoked Husband." An amateur début. Frank Marshall's charming "New Year's Eve." Sudden end of the Fifth Avenue Theatre. Fire on New Year's Day 1873. Total loss. Daly resolves to go on immediately. Interview with A. T. Stewart. The old New York Theatre converted into a Fifth Avenue Theatre in three weeks. Great throng at opening, January 21, 1873. "Alixé" and Clara Morris. "Madeleine Morel." Revivals of former successes. Close of season. A charity benefit and Adelaide Neilson. We look at another scene of Daly's activities.

THE theatre was made splendid for the next season; a tableau by Gariboldi, "The Crowning of Comedy," decorated the ceiling—a subject reproduced by the same artist for the new Fifth Avenue Theatre on Twenty-eighth Street, and embroidered in silk for Daly's last theatre on Broadway. The opening piece was a play by Bronson Howard<sup>1</sup> with strong (if not violent) features, in which all the company took part; it was, in fact, written to fit them all. But it did not make a lasting impression, and its withdrawal enabled Daly to indulge his passion for the classic drama. Charles Fisher had just joined his forces and enabled him to extend his range of old comedies. Fisher's style, more French than English,

agreed well with the lightness of touch observable in all the Daly revivals. He had had immense experience in many companies, from Burton's to Lester Wallack's. There was a new young woman too, Sara Jewett, a pupil of Miss Morant, who possessed all the freshness of Agnes Ethel without her fascination, and all the energy of Clara Morris without her power.

"The Road to Ruin" introduced Fisher <sup>1</sup> as *Old Dornton*, one of the choice impersonations of W. R. Blake. Lewis was cast for *Goldfinch*, but to the manager's astonishment declined it, not because it was not good enough but because it was "entirely out of his way." Clarke took it and gave it the correct rollicking touch. The fact was that Lewis detested old comedy, yet he was a good *Touchstone*, *Grumio*, and even *Sir Toby Belch*. The next revival was "The Belle's Stratagem," <sup>2</sup> with Louis James as *Doricourt*, Clarke as *Flutter*, Davidge as *Old Hardy*, Miss Davenport as *Letitia*, and Miss Morant as *Mrs. Rockett*. Then came "Everybody's Friend," <sup>3</sup> the feature of which was the tragic Louis James in *Felix Featherly*, a part that J. B. Polk had once rejected as beneath him. The greatest novelty, however, was "The Inconstant," for the first time in seventeen years, <sup>4</sup> with Miss Morris as *Oriana* (her first appearance in page's dress, and a very spirited, slender, and symmetrical figure), Miss Davenport as *Bizarre*, Clarke as *Young Mirabel*, and Griffiths as *Old Mirabel*. Shakespeare's "Merry Wives of Windsor" presented Fisher as *Falstaff*, Miss Davenport as *Mrs. Ford*, Miss Morant as *Mrs. Page*, Miss Jewett as *Anne*, Mrs. Gilbert as *Dame Quickly*, Clarke as *Page*, Louis James as *Ford*, Lewis as *Slender*, Lemoyne as *Caius*, Davidge as *Evans*, Whiting as *Shallow*, Ringgold as *Fenton*, and Fawcett as

<sup>1</sup> Oct. 28, 1872.

<sup>3</sup> Nov. 4, 1872.



*Host* — a memorable cast. Fisher's fat knight was all nature. There never seemed to be anything theatrical about his bulk nor anything assumed in voice or gait. The rolling eye and smacking lip had no suggestion of the theatre, and seemed to have no taint of grossness.

Equally pleasing to lovers of old comedy was Fisher's *Sir Peter Teazle* in the next revival, "The School for Scandal."<sup>1</sup> Miss Davenport was *Lady Teazle*, and it continued to be her part for ten years. Clarke was *Charles*, James was *Joseph*, Lewis *Moses*, Davidge *Crabtree*, and Miss Morant *Mrs. Candour*. Such a revival is the supreme test of a dramatic company. If you doubt it, try to recall how many managers venture upon it in these days. In rapid succession followed "Married Life"<sup>2</sup> and "A Bold Stroke for a Husband."<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile, a débutante from the ranks of New York social life, Mrs. C. D. Abbott, made her first appearance at a matinée<sup>4</sup> in "The Baroness," from the French. A new comedy, Frank Marshall's "New Year's Eve," a charming picture of English life, was produced on December 23, and as interpreted by Miss Morris, Miss Davenport, Mrs. Gilbert, Miss Mortimer, Whiting, Burnett, Clarke, Rockwell, Davidge, Ringgold, and Fawcett, became at once a favorite.

New Year's day, 1873, was a typical winter's afternoon, and the streets were covered with snow and ice. At about half past five I was stepping into a sleigh, when the driver with a troubled air informed me of a report that "the Fifth Avenue Theatre was on fire." Driving immediately in that direction, it was found that we could approach no nearer than the corner of Fifth Avenue and Twenty-fourth Street, as a cordon of police was stretched

<sup>1</sup> Dec. 9, 1872.

<sup>3</sup> Dec. 17, 1872.

cross the latter thoroughfare. From that spot an immense crowd of strangely silent spectators watched a roaring flame ascend as in a chimney from the walls of what had been, an hour before, the most cherished playhouse in America. After a brief view of the melancholy sight, and the receipt of many condolences from acquaintances in the crowd, I returned to our home and learned the particulars of the disaster.

About half an hour after the departure of the audience which had crowded the afternoon performance, Appleton, in the box office in front of the theatre and scarcely six feet from the street, was astonished by a gush of smoke and flame beneath him, and had only time to close his safe, clutch at his cash, and escape through the doorway. The artist on the paint frame above the stage beheld the smoke rising through the openings in the orchestra and sought his way blindly out. In a few minutes the whole house was a furnace. The doorkeeper, whose post was at the front basement entrance, had not appeared, but alarm for his safety was succeeded by astonishment when he was seen coming toward the theatre after it was practically consumed. He had absented himself without leave to join his family at their New Year dinner. But for his desertion it is probable that the fire, detected at the beginning, might have been extinguished. Once before the theatre had been threatened by a fire which broke out in one of the dressing rooms below the auditorium. It was caused by the careless handling of an alcohol torch used by one of the cleaners; but Thomas, Uncle Woodgate's black boy, was then the doorkeeper, and, intelligent as well as fearless, he seized the light hose which was kept on a reel by the front door and ran with it down the corridor upon which the rooms opened, and quickly extin-



THE FIFTH AVENUE THEATRE

The day after the fire



torium there were similar reels of light hose, besides fire extinguishers in every part of the house. All that was needed was a watchman faithful to his post. It is characteristic of my brother's merciful disposition that, knowing this unfortunate guardian would be unable to get employment after such omission of duty, he took him back for the sake of his family.

Our house that night was filled with friends calling to condole with my brother upon his great loss, but he was found in anything but a depressed mood. Although totally uninsured and facing an incalculable loss in wardrobes, furniture, manuscripts, libraries, and records, his only thought was how to continue his artistic enterprise and the season so suddenly extinguished. To do this it was necessary to reproduce the Fifth Avenue Theatre somewhere, move his company there, and go on as if nothing had happened. But it must be done instantly — while the memory of the public was fresh. At eight o'clock that night, as A. T. Stewart was rising from dinner, Mr. Augustin Daly was announced. "I thought," said Mr. Stewart, advancing with outstretched hand, "that I should see you!" Stewart, as we know, was the proprietor of the New York Theatre where "Griffith Gaunt" and "Under the Gaslight" were produced. It was then the only vacant theatre in New York, and Stewart, who knew Daly and his enterprising spirit, had probably been listening for the doorbell since six P.M.

A lease for two years was agreed upon at once, and next day Mr. Daly was closeted with builders and decorators, who were to convert the wretched old barn into some interior resemblance to the Fifth Avenue Theatre as it was on New Year's morning. This was accomplished

tracts were signed, though at the heavy cost which such rapid work entails.

Meanwhile the extensive company was held together. Some one remarked that Daly was "a mother to it." Lewis replied, "I don't know about the mother, but he is certainly our father!" Each member suffered individual losses. The manager grieved most for his prompt books and his letters. Some of the latter were found, and have been consulted in writing these pages; but the charred edges crumble in my hand. Letters of sympathy poured in. Wallack wrote offering his theatre, and sent a message from Sothern. "The ladies and gentlemen of the Fifth Avenue Theatre Company" had a meeting, with Davidge in the chair, to express their sympathy and the hope that their manager would continue "in the same way he has so successfully employed in elevating and furthering the best interests of the Drama in New York." Bronson Howard wrote from Detroit: "What with the epizoötic and snowstorms and fire, you and Providence seem to have had a serious falling out of late." What was greatly valued by Daly was a letter of sympathy from the veteran James L. Smith of *The Sunday Courier*, who had given him, as a youth, his first employment and encouragement.

To open "Daly's Fifth Avenue Theatre," as the rejuvenated playhouse was now called, the manager resolved to produce a new play, reserving the fateful but successful "New Year's Eve" for contingencies. He had offers in plenty. Mrs. Olive Logan, writing her gratitude for his efforts with her "Surf," announced a new piece prepared in collaboration with her husband, William Wirt Sikes, the United States Consul at Cardiff, Wales. Dumas' "Femme de Claude" had been acquired by formal contract with that eminent author. Bret Harte had already

"217 East 49th St.  
Wednesday.

My dear Mr. Daly :

Sunday is, in law, a *dies non*, but in fact is a good day for the unfolding of a great moral purpose, such as I need not say would be a play from this hand, submitted to the author of 'Divorce.'

Look for me then on Sunday at 10 A.M., at wh. hour the curtain will rise promptly upon the performances of two young men from whom posterity expects everything.

Confidentially yours  
Bret Harte.

Aug. Daly Esq."

But Daly already had in mind a novelty. This was "Alixé," from the French of "La Comtesse de Somerive," by the Baroness de Prevois. On the night of January 21, 1873, the eager crowd that poured into Nos. 728-30 Broadway and found themselves on velvet carpets in an interior of crimson and gold and in the very atmosphere of the uptown "jewel box," might have recalled the many changes upon this spot. Old churchgoers remembered it as The Church of the Messiah, in which the commencement exercises of the neighboring University of the City of New York were held when a young graduate, Oakey Hall (he took the English honors), delivered an address on the poet Keats, and composed a dialogue between The Ghosts of the Past, the Present, and the Future, with the prophecy :

"Even this church of our Commencement page  
A playhouse is, with Shakespeare as the rage."

All memories however gave way when, amid a roar of applause, the familiar orchestra of the Fifth Avenue Theatre took their seats with Harvey Dodworth as leader,

accustomed place. Still greater was the welcome to the assembled company, when the curtain rose and disclosed them delightfully lined up to recite an address written by John Brougham, in which each principal had a line recalling some favorite incident of the past three years. Up to this time the genius of the enterprise had not shown himself, but no sooner was the prologue ended than the whole house burst out with "Daly!" and broke into the wildest demonstration when the tall and slender figure with the pale face and brilliant eyes stepped upon the scene. One line of his address dwells in the memory: "The casket is gone, but the jewels are safe. In fact, the Fifth Avenue Theatre is not destroyed, its life and soul are here. There is simply a change of scene; and between the last act and this, 'a period of three weeks is supposed to have elapsed'; that is all."

By the time the personal greetings between the stage and the public had been exchanged, the audience was full of the spirit of the old nights in the old house. The old spell was upon everybody, now profoundly strengthened by the affecting play that inaugurated the new house. Miss Morris, Miss Davenport, Miss Morant, Miss Dietz, Miss Mortimer, Clarke, James, Lewis, Fisher, Burnett, and Beekman were the few who shared in the eventful first night. Miss Morris and Miss Dietz represented half-sisters, the children of the *Comtesse de Somerive* (Miss Morant). The elder, condemned to the shade while her happier sister sports in the sunlight, has nevertheless no plaint to make, even when her only affection has to be added to her sacrifices. This stroke kills. There was no display of force in the acting of Miss Morris. None was called for; the mute appeal was transcendent.

The press, like the audience, was enraptured. Said



told is a credit to the stage." Said another: "Faults may no doubt be discerned after the glare which Mr. Daly has thrown about this opening subsides, but it is more graceful, as it is more delightful, to simply recount at this time the unqualified triumph of the management in the new home, the company on the new stage, and the play of 'Alixé' in its new dress."

For two months the new play charmed, and then "New Year's Eve" was revived, followed by "Old Heads and Young Hearts" and "Divorce." The season of five months here was closed<sup>1</sup> with Mosenthal's "Madeleine Morel," produced on May 20, 1873. The dénouement of this play was altered by Daly. It presented an incident new to the theatre. A novice about to take the veil meets in a church with a marriage party; and the bridegroom is recognized by the despairing girl as the cause of her misery. The awful nature of the result, the frenzy and wreck of mind, was almost beyond the limits of a social play and belonged rather to the regions of pure tragedy.

Daly found time to arrange the annual charity benefit at the Academy of Music, which netted ten thousand dollars and which ought to be associated with the memory of the beautiful Adelaide Neilson. Her generous co-operation having been secured by Daly, she exerted herself to retain E. A. Sothern, whom a California engagement threatened to carry off, and succeeded. Sothern played in "A Regular Fix," Miss Neilson and her company played an act of "As You Like It," the Daly company gave the third act of "Madeleine Morel," Charles Fechter appeared in an act of "Hamlet," George L. Fox in scenes from "Humpty Dumpty," and Dan Bryant with his minstrels. It was one of the few benefit perform-

ances in which there have been no disappointments — thanks to Miss Neilson.

In addition to the very great labors of this season, enough to tax the energies of many men, Daly leased and managed the Grand Opera House in New York, the very large and handsome theatre on the corner of Twenty-third Street and Eighth Avenue; the account of this unique undertaking will be made the subject of a separate chapter.

## CHAPTER XI

How managers "spread." Daly leases the Grand Opera House. "Le Roi Carotte" a great spectacle. "Round the Clock." New York scenes. Harry Hill's. Vice in the rough. "The Cataract of the Ganges." "Roughing It." Production of Sardou's "L'Oncle Sam." His pictures of American life, social, industrial, and political. Charles Fechter, turned out of 14th Street, is sheltered by Daly at the Grand Opera House. "Monte Cristo." "The Corsican Brothers." "Ruy Blas." "Charge" for charity. Bronson Howard and "Old Western Hemisphere." Second Season. Charlotte Cushman's opinion of the modern stage. A managers' association. Borrowing actors. Shakespeare memorial window. Young John Drew introduced to Daly. Portents. "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Grand opera with Lucca and Di Murska. "The Wandering Jew." "Humpty Dumpty Abroad." Fox as Richard III for charity. Another benefit got up by Wallack and Daly. Daly's Broadway Theatre begins with "La Fille de Madame Angot." "The New Magdalen" rehearsed by Wilkie Collins. The panic of 1873 ruins theatrical business and catches Daly with two theatres on his shoulders and a third building. "An Atlas of Theatres."

IN the noon of his prosperity at the Fifth Avenue Theatre Daly found himself lessee of the Grand Opera House. Young and phenomenally successful theatrical managers are never satisfied with one theatre. Material, excellent and abundant, demands more room; I have no doubt that Thespis was early compelled to hire two carts. When Daly was offered "Le Roi Carotte," — music by Offenbach, book by Sardou, a spectacle and opera suitable for a great theatre, — the Grand Opera House was the only place available. It was out of the way, and accessible

eye on it and was waiting for the present tenant to fail, as all had done who leased it since it was built by Samuel Pike in 1868 as a rival to the Academy of Music. But Daly, not knowing Mr. Duff's plans, bought out the tenant for fifteen thousand dollars and began to reconstruct the stage for "King Carrot." An expensive company was assembled: Mrs. John Wood (lately returned from England), Miss Emma Howson, Miss Rose Hersee, John Brougham, Stuart Robson, two families of acrobats, — the Majiltons and the Lauris, — and an army of other people of both sexes. The costumes and properties were bought in France for a hundred thousand francs. The play cost as much more.

The story of the play, a thinly disguised political squib, told how a people discarded an ancient line of sovereigns to pick a king from the kitchen garden, and finally, in a great revolt, restored their exiled monarch. It drew immensely at first. A striking tableau was the resurrection of the city of Pompeii from its lava-covered fields, and its reëngulfment by an eruption of Vesuvius. An admirable trick was the dismemberment of the wizard Quiribibi, the casting of his members (under his direction) in a furnace, and his emergence therefrom rejuvenated. The music was of a superior order.

After three months the fairy spectacle was replaced by "Round the Clock," an extravaganza of New York scenes. There was "Harry Hill's," on the corner of Houston and Crosby streets, a famous spot in police annals, the detectives seldom failing to find there at some time the man or woman they wanted. The affable Mr. Hill received Mr. Daly, accompanied by the indispensable "plain clothes man," on a visit of inspection preparatory to putting the place on the stage. The room there in

was coarse and squalid. There was no "gilded vice" at Harry Hill's. A platform of plain boards held a cheap piano, for the accompaniment of singers without voices or any other attraction. Sometimes the benevolent proprietor gave a poor waif a chance to earn a living there, and on the night of the manager's visit a blind woman sang in a pitiful way, and was rewarded by contributions taken up on the spot. Throngs of visitors came and went or sat at small tables for refreshments. Several notorious "crooks" were pointed out, and well-dressed women came in now and then from the street to hold brief colloquies with them at the tables or at the bar. One tall and handsome creature, expensively gowned, stood earnestly conversing with an evil-visaged man, whose demeanor, however, was very respectful. She was known to the detectives as the wife of a burglar then serving his time, and was understood to be engaged in a serious business talk with one of his associates. After the conversation she left, with a cursory glance at the company.

The principal attraction of the place to its habitués was an occasional boxing contest between youthful amateurs or, on great occasions, between distinguished professors of the manly art of self-defence. It was the boast of Harry that he kept the best of order in his place. Signs were conspicuously posted on the walls, "No lovers allowed." But this was not to be interpreted as a discouragement of the tender passion, for the expensively dressed ladies were never so welcome as when attended by liberal admirers. The lovers who were warned off were the unspeakable ruffians who lived upon the earnings of the women.

The picturesque features of this den were what the

acteristic patrons, the humble singers and dancers, the amateur boxers; and for the exigencies of the plot, an irruption of police in pursuit of criminals was invented. This innovation was resented by Mr. Hill, who wrote to Mr. Daly, objecting also to the place being called a "crib," and advising the impresario that several gentlemen of his acquaintance were kept from visiting the Grand Opera House with their families by reason of such misinterpretations:

"N. York, Dec. 9th 1872

Mr. Daly,

I perceive by your advertisement this day the title you think proper to call my house — A Crib. Allow me to tell you plainly it never was considered in such a Light. also your representation is very Low. I never have police to rush into my house, or to be represented by such a crowd. I pay License and as such deserve and will not be held up by any one. your reputation is in its morning mine has arrived to mid day Therefore I would wish you to understand me perfectly. An alteration would be an advantage to you. As several gentlemen of my acquaintance would take their families to see Harry Hills as it is. I think you trust your agents, and have not given it any attention yourself.

resp yours.

Harry Hill.

26 E Houston"

The play was immensely attractive and drew great audiences, notwithstanding the regretted absence of the discriminating gentlemen of poor Harry Hill's acquaintance. It was acted for two months.

To follow "Round the Clock," "The Cataract of the Ganges" was revived for the first time in twenty years, — a spectacle displaying extraordinary feats of horsemanship, the chief sensation being a scene covering the whole height

of waterfalls, which a highly mettled horse with a rider ascended in great bounds, leaping from glistening rock to rock and dashing aside the spray with its hoofs. Brougham assisted his manager in grafting upon the ancient spectacle an old farce, the locale of which was East India, and which gave Mrs. Wood and himself an opportunity to enliven the scene.

After this came "Roughing It," dramatized by Mr. Daly from Mark Twain's book; and this was followed by the real sensation of the season — a picture of American life and manners by an eminent Frenchman whose knowledge of both was derived from foreign and domestic caricature. This instructive dramatic satire was the work of M. Victorien Sardou, and was called "L'Oncle Sam." While preparing for production at the Paris *Vaudeville*, it was engaged by my brother for America. The subsequent intelligence that it had been interdicted by the French Government as likely to be offensive to the Americans, and that M. Sardou had addressed a remonstrance to the President of the Republic, was not calculated to lessen interest on this side. Sardou said:

"I protest against this judgment. 'Uncle Sam' attacks in no way the political institutions of the United States. It is simply a comedy of manners, a criticism of American eccentricities, as the 'Famille Benoiton' was a criticism of French eccentricities; a criticism made without bitterness and which never passes the limits of that liberty which has always belonged in every age to comedy.

Not one of the personages of the play is an odious character, and if any expression *really injurious to the United States* is pointed out to me, I am ready to expunge it on the instant."

"Uncle Sam" therefore made its first appearance on any stage,<sup>1</sup> in America, and was a veritable native-born

citizen of foreign parentage. The opening scene was one of those "fashionable resorts," the upper deck of an Albany day-boat on its way to the metropolis. A couple of French tourists (one a marquis, the other a virtuoso on a concert tour) have come on deck to escape the drinking and card-playing in the saloon. Here they are joined by a compatriot, a lady from New Orleans, who gives her experience with the American judicial system in her legal contest over an estate situated partly in Massachusetts and partly in Connecticut, the house itself being divided by the State line. She had gained the suit in Connecticut, but had lost it in Massachusetts. On appeal each judgment was reversed, and she lost in Connecticut but won in Massachusetts. The final result is to give her the parlor and award her adversary the *salle à manger*. Her speculations in buying real estate are not less exciting: A clever gentleman manages to sell her a factory in Arkansas at the very moment that it is burning up; and another sells her a bog in Kentucky which "takes in" all its proprietors. The tourists are joined by a young American journalist who describes to them that typical American, the *Hon. Samuel Tapplebot* (L'Oncle Sam), who "sold brooms at the age of twelve, was porkpacker at seventeen, manufacturer of shoe-polish at twenty, made a fortune in cocoa, lost in tobacco, rose again with indigo, fell with salt pork, rebounded with cotton and settled definitely upon guano. He rises at six, rushes to his office in an omnibus, is greedy, extravagant, cunning and credulous; without scruples, yet a good fellow; will throw you overboard for a hundred dollars and spend two hundred to fish you out; a perfect type of the American whom nothing discourages, always at the front, his eyes fixed upon his three beacons — wealth for an end, cunning for the means, and as for morals —



"You know him then?" asks the marquis.

"Very well. He was my father-in-law for six months,"

responds the journalist, who had married L'Oncle Sam's eldest daughter and is happily divorced.

This introduces, of course, the characteristic American complication. The wife has married again, and we see her effusively greet her first, to whom she introduces her second. Her indulgent father complains gently of having been overlooked in the announcement of the second union. "Why," she exclaims, "didn't you get my telegram?" They discuss the respective husbands. "I like the first one best," says Uncle Sam, "and he seems to be still very fond of you!" This sets the lady thinking; and, as the assistance of the journalist is important to one of Papa's new deals, she confidently undertakes to secure it. The result is a return to number one.

A "typical" aldermanic contest is described. Three days before the election, the Democrats have gained a great point by exhibiting at their headquarters an educated seal which smokes a pipe. The Republicans, whose candidate had risen from the cobbler's bench, were in despair until they hit upon the happy expedient of exhibiting him in the act of making a pair of shoes for the poor. After that, the seal may go to the bottom.

But the flower of all things American in the play is the American girl, exemplified in *Miss Sarah Tapplebot*, the orphan niece of the prosperous *Uncle Sam*. She comes upon the crowded deck, looks about for a seat, taps the marquis on the shoulder with her parasol, and, when he starts to his feet, hat in hand, carries away his chair to sit on it beside her own party. "She did not even say 'thank you!'" murmurs the bewildered foreigner. "Oh,

the marquis determines to win the American girl, and reduce to submission this self-possessed creature who flirts with a hundred men until she chooses her particular victim and compels him to wear her chains. Fate is propitious. Without waiting to be introduced, she takes his arm as a matter of course and orders him to help her down the gang-plank. As the members of her party rush off to business in different directions, these two walk about the town, visit the shops, and lunch in a restaurant; and he is finally invited to tea at her uncle's hotel. "But won't your uncle think it rather strange?" "My uncle! It's none of his business!" He accepts. The home of *Tapplebot* is a hotel. All wealthy Americans live in hotels. Hither come at night a dozen couples of young people, all flirting, each couple seated apart. The bewitching *Sarah* engages the enraptured *Marquis* in conversation in which she cross-examines him as to his rank, his income, his capital and what it is invested in, permits his ardent protestations of love, secures his pencilled declaration, and in the end gets her hat and wrap and announces that she is going to Long Branch. The marquis sadly relates the sequel: "I was sent skipping from icebergs to flames, from red pepper to snowballs, exasperated at beholding the fruit almost at my lips and unable to clutch it. I was mad. I understand now the meaning of the word 'flirtation'! But how do they carry it on without singeing their wings? Heavens! What are American women made of? And you will ask what were the words to all this music? A serious and tender prattle — conversation witty and childlike — an indefinable perfume rising from this strange flower of a new world! At length yesterday she became all at once reserved — alarmed! I expected to see her at dinner —

without a word of farewell." The explanation of her flight, however, was simple. This bold, capable, and confident young American has suddenly become conscious of love, and her flight is a confession. He has conquered. He does not know it until he clasps her in his arms and she pleads, "Leave me — oh, leave me — Robert, I am afraid!" Whereupon he joyfully exclaims: "At last! That is the cry I wanted to hear from your lips! Oh, maiden modesty! You still exist!" and he makes her his wife.

Somehow, the play was not convincing.

While "Uncle Sam" was playing, Mr. Daly learned of the misfortune of Charles Fechter, who was compelled to abandon his enterprise of converting the Fourteenth Street Theatre into a model playhouse after his own artistic designs. Daly at once invited the shipwrecked manager and actor to make use of the Grand Opera House and its company for a timely appearance:

"28 March, '73.

Dear Mr. Daly

I really don't know how to answer your kind proposal; or rather I answer by accepting it *at once*.

You have taken a frightful load off my mind: That of breaking my faith with the public.

Although I was unlawfully and in a vile way forced to it, I could not bear the notion of disappointing my supporters; thanks to you I feel myself anew; and thanks to you again 'Monte Cristo' will be presented this season spite all ugly tricks to prevent its appearance.

Name your terms, I accept them 'd'avance'; and shall ever consider myself in your debt, for the light your brotherly assistance will throw on the whole matter.

Yours thankfully

Preparation was immediately made by Daly for Fechter's début in "Monte Cristo," the play he was preparing in Fourteenth Street when evicted, and on April 28 it was given in magnificent style to a crowded house. Fechter was then at the ripe age of fifty, and master of the whole art of acting. His acting was technical perfection, and inspired on this occasion by his victory over what had seemed lasting defeat. Next day he wrote:

"29 April '73.

Dear Daly

I think '*We've got 'em.*'

Now let me once more and personally thank you *from the bottom of my heart* for your brotherly and effectual support in the whole matter. It was indeed wonderfully carried out! No word in our poor restricted language can express my entire satisfaction.

Thanks again heartily. \* \* \* \*

Yours ever sincerely

Chas. Fechter."

"The Corsican Brothers" followed "Monte Cristo" for one week and was succeeded by "Ruy Blas" for another. On June 14 the closing performance of this arduous and exciting season took place. Before going on his vacation Fechter responded in his hearty style to a request to play for charity:

"14 May 73

My dear Daly

I am all yours, and at the free disposal of the Foundlings' Asylum.

My 'terms' as usual for all charitable purposes: \$00000!

Sincerely thine

Chas. Fechter.

We must have a chat about next season — if you really want

Fechter did not play again under Mr. Daly's management, but he continued for five years afterwards to fill engagements in various cities in this country. He ultimately retired to a farm in Pennsylvania, and died, it is said, in poverty. Although exacting very high terms for his performances, his indifference in business matters usually left him in difficulties which his faculty for contention (with managers) did not tend to lighten. His audience appeared to be limited. Although the most finished and capable of actors, he was not popular. Easily holding the whole attention while on the scene, he nevertheless sent the spectator away unsatisfied. The impression he left upon me was that of a consummate actor consciously displaying his art. As a reader, I think he would have been completely satisfying. An offer of \$500 a night for readings was made to him by J. B. Pugh, the impresario of the lecture field, through my brother, but without scenic surroundings the stage had no charm for the artist.

Before closing this chapter of Mr. Daly's first season of "grand productions" in the vast Opera House, I must confide to the reader a fancy which seized upon the imagination of Bronson Howard after he had seen "*Le Roi Carotte*." This was an immense allegorical spectacle showing the origin and growth of America, with a greater personage even than Uncle Sam as the genius of our continent and dominating the scene — "*Old Western Hemisphere*," whom I conceive to be a species of brooding giant shaping the destinies of Brother Jonathan and the Central and South American republics, all children of the venerable protector. Beginning with the red man, the play was to come down to Columbus and Montezuma and the discovery of the Pacific. The long letter of

ventive young playwright only afforded the manager a moment of pleasant contemplation, clouded perhaps by calculations of the acres of canvas, forests of timber, menageries of wild beasts, armies of supernumeraries, and treasuries of gold necessary to realize it, not to mention the time consumed in the performance, which would have had to be reckoned not by hours but by days.

For his second season at the Grand Opera House Mr. Daly thought of bringing back Miss Charlotte Cushman, then long retired, in her great part *Meg Merrilies*. His suggestion induced a reply which will be worth the reader's attention.

"Villa Cushman,  
Newport,  
R. I.

July 7th, 1873.

Dear Mr. Daly.

Your favor of the 4th in. recd. Contents noted & generally satisfactory to me. The only thing which admits of question is whether I shall be able to act seven times in the week. If I *am* able, be sure, I shall do it — but your note binds me to act seven times if I "*enter upon the engage't.*" To this I can not *bind* myself. I am not a capricious person. I have never placed myself in any antagonism to the interests of the Theatre where I am engaged — therefore you must trust to my justice & my ability to carry out *that* clause in your letter.

All else seems to me quite rightly understood by you. I do not wish to have *my* character in 'Guy Mannering' — (as I prefer it should still be called) — augmented or changed at all. As I give it — it reaches the extent of my power, & if increased would only be beyond it. It seems to me — as I recollect seeing the play acted in the old times, that properly placed upon the stage, the drama is good enough as it is. The great difficulty, to-day, is the incompetency of the actors & their carelessness in dealing with the parts in Guy Mannering, because of the

the earliest time, in London — what great names were in all the subordinate parts! Get together a company to perform these characters as they have been — & still can be — concocted by the old actor Terry in conjunction with Wm. Murray & Sir Walter Scott himself — who wrote things for the Drama which did not exist in the novel — ought to be good enough for the audiences of to-day. Let the singers be first rate — the acting first rate & the disposition of scenery &c. — as you are famous for making it — & its chances are as good as would be any of the old plays. The trouble now-a-days exists in the actors — they lack respect for the profession — or the characters they represent, think too much of how much money they can get, & how little they can get off with *giving*, in the way of real labour in their art! In a word they do not forget themselves — & unless one does — he can never be an actor! Am I right or not? I will send you the book of Guy Mannering in a day or so. My letter is for your own eye — In my stricture upon actors — of course there are honorable exceptions, & I hope as you have found some, you may be able to find more & bring them into ‘Guy Mannering,’ when we shall move the town not by the startling effects of our strong *charcoal sketch* but by the grand strong finished picture *as a whole*. Believe me dear sir,

Yours truly

Charlotte Cushman.”

A little contribution to the general theatrical history of the period will not be out of place here. The successful entry of Daly into New York theatricals had wrought for a time a wonderful change of heart among the old-time managers. They resolved to abandon the old policy of cut-throat competition and to come together. A meeting was called at Booth’s Theatre, and those represented agreed to form an association for the conduct of their business, in which they had a common interest. Mr. Booth’s brother-in-law, J. H. Magonigle, was made secretary,

were members. This fraternity could be very serviceable in times of need. Theodore Moss of Wallack's applied to Daly for a loan from his extensive company to complete the cast of Boucicault's "Mora"; and later in the regular season Wallack himself wrote under the stress of urgent need :

"Wallack's, New York, Octr. 20th 1873.

Dear Mr. Daly

I am in a dilemma caused by the unprincipled conduct of a lady, who has deliberately and without expressed reason, broken her written engagement with me.

Will you assist me? I ask it because, under like circumstances, I would certainly do as much for you.

Will you allow me to engage Miss Rogers <sup>1</sup> for a short period (to be named by you) to perform 'Miss Hardcastle' in 'She Stoops to Conquer'?

If you could spare her and thus oblige me I shall appreciate your kindness very highly and will hope for some opportunity to requite you in kind.

In any case let me take this opportunity of wishing you all success with your new theatre.

I am

Very truly yours

Lester Wallack."

The New York managers interested themselves about this time in a proposed memorial window to Shakespeare to be placed in the Stratford Church :

"139 East 17 St.

Jan. 5.

My dear Mr. Daly

I send you the design for the projected memorial window to Shakespeare I have just received from my friend Graves; do



you not think it would be a graceful thing for the several companies of New York to identify themselves with the movement by a general subscription of a small amount, say one dollar, from each individual. Should you agree with me, the proposition would come with more force from you than from any other, as I am well aware with what energy and perseverance you carry out whatever object you undertake.

Sincerely yours  
John Brougham."

In a line from Mrs. John Drew, her young son, then a mere lad, was now first presented to his future manager. John was evidently in New York for a good time :

"Arch St. Theatre  
Phila. May 28 '73.

My dear Sir

If not inconsistent with your regulations will you oblige me by giving my son (the bearer of this) two seats for each of your theatres.

Yours truly  
Louisa Drew."

Aug. Daly Esqr.

All of my brother's successes as playwright and manager for ten years had been immediately produced at Mrs. Drew's Arch Street Theatre; and between the famous actress and the New York author there subsisted a warm regard.

By the end of his first season the Grand Opera House began to assume the proportions of a white elephant, and the manager recalled to me an incident of his first entry into that huge building. He found upon his desk the fragment of a leaf from the Bible which had apparently blown in through the open window, and which contained these verses, quite prophetic of a venture whose loss

"For which of you having a mind to build a tower, doth not first sit down and reckon the charges that are necessary, whether he have wherewithal to finish it:

Lest after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that see him begin to mock him,

Saying: This man began to build and was not able to finish."

The loveliest spectacle the stage can offer, Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream," opened the second season. Harkins was made stage manager, having returned from his brief excursion to the Union Square Theatre, the prospects of which establishment were somewhat clouded by the retirement of Miss Ethel preparatory to her marriage. The hard-handed men of Athens were: G. L. Fox *Bottom*, Frank Hardenbergh *Quince*, Leclercq *Flute*, Jennings *Snout*, and C. K. Fox *Snug*. For *Puck* (the despair of managers who would realize the ideals of the lovers of Shakespeare) Daly found a pretty and intelligent child, — "Fay" Templeton. It may be recorded here that Mr. Daly's prompt book for this production was sought by Miss Cushman for one of her readings.

Shakespeare was followed by Italian opera under the excellent Max Maretzek, in which Pauline Lucca, Tamberlik, and Ilma Di Murska made their débuts. Lucca and Di Murska sang together in "Il Flauto Magico." Shakespeare attracted for only three weeks, and Lucca and Di Murska could not entice to Twenty-third Street the operatic patrons who were tied to their shares and chairs in Irving Place. The impresario who sets up Italian opera in New York in opposition to the stockholders' establishment cannot be saved by prayer.

The new English version of "The Wandering Jew" was now put on. It was the latest Parisian dramatization of Eugène Sue's romance; but the wandering Jew, pursued

Grand Opera House, and he departed as the rumble of the railroad train in "Under the Gaslight" was heard in the near distance. This revival was in turn supplanted by "A Flash of Lightning."

A hit was finally made in a new pantomime called "Humpty Dumpty Abroad," for which Mr. Daly constructed an introduction adapted from a French *féerie*. Fox was now permanently severed by Mr. Duff from the Olympic Theatre and installed at the Grand Opera House. He was exceedingly funny in farce as well as pantomime; in fact, he was the last of the old-fashioned farce actors. He was billed to appear at a charity benefit at the Grand Opera House, and the advertisement announced that the entertainment would conclude with the fifth act of Shakespeare's sublime tragedy "Richard the Third," in which Mr. G. L. Fox would sustain the character of *Richard the Third* and Mr. Frederick Vokes that of the *Earl of Richmond*. The bare announcement of this desecration of the classic drama was sufficient to attract a vast audience, which awaited with emotion the respective appearances of Fox and Vokes and their desperate combat on Bosworth Plain. When it is understood that all the characters delivered the immortal lines of Shakespeare (and Cibber) with the utmost gravity; that the falling of Fox's steel visor, whenever he attempted to speak, cut off most of his lines until he reversed the helmet and wore it hindside before; that one of his steel greaves or leg-pieces got loose and was kicked knee high at every step he took; that, in the combat, his Humpty Dumpty shuffle was opposed to the incredible agility of Vokes, whose *Richmond* escaped death by feats of legs as well as of arms, the whole stupendous joke may be faintly realized. Until we have another Fox and another Vokes

The entertainment was further enlivened by Mr. Fox selling tickets at the box-office, the Messrs. Vokes acting as ushers, and the Misses Vokes obliging at the flower stand and distributing programmes.

Another benefit for the poor was given during the same season under the joint supervision of Mr. Wallack and Mr. Daly, and they remitted the proceeds to the lady patronesses of the affair, at whose head was Mrs. James I. Roosevelt. The ladies generously resolved to devote a portion of the amount to the profession :

“Mr. Augustin Daly.

Sir.

Enclosed please find a check for Nine hundred, sixty five dollars and 87 cents, being one half of one third of the money donated by Mr. Wallack and yourself to the ‘Lady Patronesses’ of the *Matinée* at the Academy of Music March 19th.

At a meeting held at Mrs. Sherwood’s, the ladies unanimously resolved to return one third of the whole amount received to Mr. Wallack and yourself to be distributed among the aged and indigent actors and actresses of the City.

I was appointed to receive the money and distribute it according to the wishes of the ladies. Permit me to thank you in their name for your noble donation.

Yours with respect

Cornelia Roosevelt.

836 Broadway.

April 30th

1874.”

Wallack wrote :

“May 20th

13 W. 30th St.

Dear Daly —

I’m blessed if I know what we had better do with our Charity

By jingo, now that I've got money for them — nobody seems to be poor. However, I have divided mine into portions of \$25. each. If I don't find as many as I had anticipated requiring relief — I shall make the twenty-fives into fifties and relieve a lesser number with larger sums.

I hope your O. T. was a good success —

Yours ever truly

Lester Wallack.

A. Daly Esq."

In the summer of 1873 the building of a new Fifth Avenue Theatre was begun on Twenty-eighth Street, and the recently fitted up New York Theatre (also called the New Fifth Avenue) was renamed "Daly's Broadway Theatre," and was to be supplied with stars supported by a stock company. The first engagement was extremely fortunate. It was that of Mdle. Aimée with "La Fille de Madame Angot," a work so superior to the ordinary *bouffes* that it was awarded at once by competent critics a place in comic opera. Following this brilliant musical attraction came some engagements which were unremunerative: Miss Minnie Walton, Mr. J. K. Emmett, William H. Lingard and his wife, Miss Alice Dunning, Miss Lucille Western, Miss Virginia Vaughan, and lastly Miss Carlotta Leclercq in a dramatization of Wilkie Collins' "The New Magdalen," rehearsed by himself in the intervals of a lecture tour in America.

Hardly was the season of 1873 under way when financial disaster overtook the country. The failure of Jay Cooke & Co. in the early autumn rendered every security practically unmarketable, and caused the suspension of nearly every trust company and of all the banks in New York save one — the Chemical. People in easy circumstances were suddenly reduced to borrow for the ordinary ex-

in the first extreme period of anxiety. Of course theatrical business felt the effect of the financial disaster immediately. Daly was caught with two theatres open, a third building, and three companies to provide for. The *Daily Graphic*, the first daily illustrated newspaper, covered the front page of its issue of November 11, 1873, with a cartoon representing Daly bending beneath the vast burden of the Grand Opera House, and having as his sole support a staff labelled "Fifth Avenue Theatre." The cartoon was entitled "An Atlas of Theatres."

THIRD PERIOD: 1873-1877





## CHAPTER XII

The New Fifth Avenue Theatre built for Daly. Its cost to him. Inciting Americans to write plays. Mark Twain's letters. He suggests W. D. Howells. Mr. Howells' letter. Bronson Howard. M. Villa of the *Courier des Etats Unis*. Oliver Wendell Holmes writes the opening address for the new theatre. His letters. Delay in opening caused by the panic of 1873. The Company. Defection of Miss Morris. Opening of the new house. "Fortune" a failure. "The Parricide." Arrival of Miss Ada Dyas from England. "Man and Wife." "Folline." Production of "Love's Labour's Lost" for the first time in America. Richard Grant White's letter. Oakley Hall advises Daly to adapt Shakespeare. Production of "Charity." Miss Davenport's "Ruth Tredgett." Production of "Monsieur Alphonse." Bijou Heron. Revival of "Divorcee" and "Oliver Twist." The bad beginning makes a good end.

ON the site of the present Fifth Avenue Theatre on Twenty-eighth Street near Broadway, there once stood Ferrero's dancing academy, or Apollo Hall, afterwards converted into the little St. James Theatre, where Susan and Blanche Galton (the latter afterwards Mrs. Thomas Whiffen of "Pinafore" fame) played vaudeville, and Steele Mackaye first displayed his Delsarte system of acting. The property belonged to the Gilsey family, and they offered to build a theatre upon it for Mr. Daly according to his own designs, the interior and stage to be fitted up and furnished at his own expense, and the rent to be thirty thousand dollars per annum for the first five years, and thirty-five thousand afterwards. The offer was accepted, although the furnishing and fitting up involved a cost of about forty thousand dollars before the doors were opened. The building was to be ready in September, 1873, in time for the

opening of the regular season. This contract was made at the time of the greatest inflation of prices after the war; namely, in the spring of 1873. Mr. Daly ordered from Gariboldi, for the decoration of the great space above the elliptical proscenium arch, a reproduction of his "Crowning of Comedy" which had embellished the ceiling of the old Fifth Avenue Theatre. A crimson satin drop curtain — the first of the kind ever shown in a theatre — was to be one of the surprises of the opening night. The new playhouse was to be called "The New Fifth Avenue Theatre." It should be noted that the entrance at that time was on Twenty-eighth Street.

Daly was active in exciting among the literary Americans of the day the ambition to win fame as playwrights. The first he approached was Mark Twain, who responded modestly to repeated solicitations :

"Hartford, May 4.

My dear Daly,

One of these days, somewhere in the future, I may surprise and grieve you by reminding you of that invitation, & proposing to revive it; but I mean to have the modesty to serve a decent apprenticeship before I make such a lofty venture.

I never tried the stage before; but by re-writing Peter Spyk, I managed to change the language & the character to a degree that enabled me to talk the one & represent the other after a fashion — but I am not equal to the Metropolitan boards yet.

Yrs. sincerely

Saml. L. Clemens.

But mind, I thank you for the compliment of the invitation anyway."

"Elmira, N. Y., Aug. 14.

My dear Mr. Daly,

I will hope that in the course of time I will be so situated that I can make the attempt, but I am debarred now by a book contract which I keep shirking and dodging but which I can't

venture to shirk any longer. There is more money in books than in plays, but still, when I get the chance I shall be cheerfully willing to intrude further upon the dramatic field.

Yrs. truly

Saml. L. Clemens."

"Farmington Avenue, Hartford.

My dear Mr. Daly,

Oct. 29.

Although I am not able to write a play now, there are better men that can. Would it not be well worth your while to provoke W. D. Howells of the Atlantic Monthly into writing a play? My reason for making the suggestion is that I think he is writing a play. I by no means know this, but I guess it from a remark dropped by an acquaintance of his. I know Howells well, but he has not confided anything of the kind to me. Still, I think if you and Bronson are done with your fight (I mean the newspaper one) it would be a right good thing to hurl another candidate into the jaws of the critics.

I am not meaning to intrude & hope I am not.

Yrs. truly

Saml. L. Clemens."

When his play of "Ah Sin" was finally submitted to Mr. Daly, it needed more altering than Bronson Howard's first draft of "Saratoga."

A brief note pencilled upon a post card is characteristic :

"7 A.M. Wedn'dy.

I can only tender my regrets & compliments & say I am at this moment leaving for that bourne from whence no traveler returns when sober (Elmira, N.Y.) Excuse haste & a bad postal card.

Yrs. truly

S. L. Clemens."

Mr. Daly did venture in accordance with Mark Twain's suggestion gently to "provoke" Mr. Howells into writing a play, and received the following :

"Cambridge, Mass.

Nov. 14, 1874.

My dear Sir:—

Do not suppose from the great deliberation with which I answer your obliging letter that I was not very glad indeed to get it.

I have long had the notion of a play, which I have now briefly exposed to Mr. Clemens, and which he thinks will do. It's against it, I suppose, that it's rather tragical, but perhaps—certainly if you've ever troubled yourself with my undramatic writings,—you know that I can't deal exclusively in tragedy, and I think I could make my play in some parts such a light affair that many people would never know how deeply they ought to have been moved by it.

I have also the idea of a farce or vaudeville of strictly American circumstances.

Of course I'm a very busy man, and I must do these plays in moments of leisure from my editorial work. I'm well aware that I can't write a good play by inspiration, and when I've sketched my plots and done some scenes I shall, with your leave, send them for your criticism.

Yours very truly,

W. D. Howells."

Bronson Howard was busily engaged with a new theme which was subsequently to take shape as "Moorcroft":

"My dear Mr. Daly,

Your favor of the 18th with check enclosed (\$70) is before me, for which my thanks. I am now at work on the John Hay idea play which I spoke to you about more than a year ago—you have probably forgotten it. I know the story of this will be novel and striking. What success I may have in working up an essentially serious play remains to be seen; my success in the case of "Lilian's Last Love," from your standpoint, was not, certainly, encouraging. But I am particularly anxious to have at least one successful serious play. I know my forte is the

other way, (as well as my tastes) but it seems so strongly for my interest before the public to lay aside the cap and bells at least once that I shall make a strong effort. I have found society here an allurement and an interference; indeed I confess to having been 'lazy' for several months — the first time for many years.

I shall try to work up "The First of May" in the rollicking fun way in time for its natural and proper season next year.

During a recent visit to Chicago, by the way, I met Bartley Campbell. Have you seen any of his plays? 'Peril' and 'Fate' I am told are good. His 'Risks,' recently produced, which I saw, was hastily constructed but showed signs of excellent ingenuity in the way of plot — the direction in which I feel a desert-like barrenness sometimes. I feel you could use Campbell to good advantage with some of your attention — such as you have given to me. How he would be in working up details I cannot say; but if he comes in your way I think it will pay you to give him *attention* and encouragement.

As soon as I can get my present work into an understandable form you shall see it, of course.

Your sincere friend

Bronson C. Howard.

Detroit, June 20, 1873."

M. Villa of the *Courier des Etats Unis*, an enthusiastic admirer of Mr. Daly's adaptations from the French, called his attention to the "Monsieur Alphonse" of Alexander Dumas *fils*, which had just made the greatest success in twenty years at the Paris *Gymnase*, the theatre of emotional modern dramas; and Augustin secured it through the agency of Mrs. Olive Logan Sikes. He consulted Mr. James R. Osgood of Boston on the subject of an opening address to be written by either John G. Whittier or Oliver Wendell Holmes. Acting upon the suggestion of Mr. Osgood, the task was proposed to Dr. Holmes. His letters will be found interesting:

"Boston, Nov. 3d, 1873.

My dear Sir,

I should like to have a day or two to think of your polite proposition. On Wednesday of this week I think I can send you my answer, which I hope will be in season whether it is affirmative or the contrary.

Very truly yours,  
O. W. Holmes."

"Boston Nov. 5th, 1873.

My dear Sir,

I have been writing *at* an Address or Prologue at such intervals as I could command and have finished just fifty lines, which must grow to nearer a hundred before the poem will properly finish itself. I hope by the end of this week to mail you the first draught. I think it would be well for you to send me a few words either of local allusion or in some way indicating a point or two that might be adapted to your audience. I do not know that you have fixed on the play for the evening, but if you have I should like well enough to know what it is. In fact any little hint with local character might prove useful, though of course I can get along without it.

Mr. Osgood thinks that two hundred and fifty dollars would be a fair honorarium for my performance, to which I should add *if it suits you*, otherwise nothing, and quite welcome to my attempt to please you.

Yours very truly  
O. W. Holmes."

"Boston, Nov. 7th, 1873.

My dear Sir,

I send you the draught I promised. If it pleases you I shall be gratified — if you have any suggestions to make I shall be happy to receive and consider them.

I never let anything go before the public without correcting the *printed proof* myself. If you like the poem and will send me the manuscript back for any alterations, I will, if you wish, have a copy or two *privately* printed by a printer who is quite safe, and send it to you in that authentic form.

I should be glad to hear from you as soon as it is convenient.

Yours very truly,  
O. W. Holmes."

"296 Beacon St., Boston.

Nov. 13th, 1873.

My dear Sir,

I am glad you are pleased with the Prologue. I shall avail myself of your hints in certain additions made and making, and send you the new draught this week or next as soon as it is ready.

Yours very truly.

O. W. Holmes.

I am so busy with my lectures at the College that I am afraid it will be impossible for me to come on to New York."

"Boston, Nov. 21st, 1873.

My dear Sir,

I send you No. 2 of my privately printed copies of the address as I have completed it, taking advantage of your hints. I hope it will please you.

It aspires to something more than the dignity of a Prologue; it is longer and more elaborate, as seems fitting for so important an occasion. I should therefore call it AN ADDRESS.

If this suits you, as I hope and trust that it may, I will send you some additional copies to be distributed at the proper time after its delivery, or if you choose, just before, in time for the next issue if any of those wish to print it. Please tell me if you would like half a dozen more.

No person has seen or heard one word of this address, not even a member of my own family, except myself, the printer and any to whom you may have shown it. The types were at once distributed and all vestiges of it at the office destroyed by my own confidential printer.

I am, my dear sir,

Yours very truly

O. W. Holmes.

I hope you will let me know if this amended copy is to your mind."

"Boston, Nov. 24th, 1873.

Dear Mr. Daly

I have just received your note containing the cheque, for which please accept my acknowledgments. I am very glad that the address pleases you. I meant that it should if I could make it do so.

You will see that I have made two light corrections. The semi-colon after 'violin' on the third page should be a comma, and I have made it so by erasing the dot.

On the last page I changed 'climbing' to 'creeping' because it is not correct to speak of climbing up and down. One cannot climb down. Will you have the kindness to make these alterations in the copy I have already sent you.

It strikes me that the place for lifting the curtain will be just as the lines

'The crash is o'er, the crinkling curtain furled,  
And lo! the glories of that brighter world!'

are being delivered. My idea would be that as the word *crinkling* is uttering the curtain should begin to crinkle and then slowly rise, and show the scene, whatever that may be. The members of the Company might be there, or make their appearance at the line —

'There are the wizards,' etc.

I give you my inexperienced idea of the matter, but of course you know a thousand times better than I do.

I am disposed to think that it is quite as important that the Address should read well in the papers for the great outside public as speak well for those who are in the house to hear it. I have tried to give it that finish in its execution which will fit it for careful and even critical reading. Whether I have succeeded, others will have to decide. With my best hopes for your success in your spirited enterprise

I am, my dear Sir

Yours very truly

O. W. Holmes."



The splendid company of the Fifth Avenue Theatre was kept together in active practice through a period of delay in the completion of the new house caused by the financial panic already mentioned, the worst ever experienced in the United States, which occurred in September, 1873, and which interfered with every building operation. The expense of maintaining his company for a period of three months was met by making a series of out-of-town engagements. Nothing was to be expected from the Grand Opera House nor from 728 Broadway, now called "The Broadway Theatre." "A Midsummer Night's Dream," gorgeously produced at the former, wilted away under midsummer day heat; and the little house, after doing a roaring business for a few weeks with *Mdlle. Aimée* and "La Fille de Madame Angot," became a pitiful burden on the manager's shoulders. To add to his difficulties, Miss Clara Morris left the company while it was on tour, and engaged to play at the Union Square Theatre when his new house opened. She had been regularly with the company in its brief visits out of town, and played in the famous repertoire of the Fifth Avenue Theatre: "Divorce," "Fernande," "New Year's Eve," "Alixé," and "Frou-Frou." The tour opened in each city with "Divorce," as it had been written expressly to display the talent of all the members of the company, and therefore served as the best introduction of the famous organization to new audiences. In Cincinnati, it happened that the comedy scenes elicited more applause than the serious and emotional parts, and Miss Morris gave notice of an intention not to appear again in "Divorce" as the opening play. Her contract for the current season was to play three months from September 1 to November 30, and for four months in the ensuing spring. In the interval she was free to make starring engagements: but it was expressly stipu-

lated that she was not to play at any other theatre than Mr. Daly's in New York from the date of the contract until its termination, without his consent. Before her first three months were up Miss Morris retired from the company; and about a fortnight before Mr. Daly opened his new theatre, she was announced to appear with Shook & Palmer at the Union Square.

Mr. Daly was privately much affected by the thought that the ability which he had fostered and developed should fail him at this critical period, but he took no steps to enforce his contract. He had been grieved the year before by Miss Ethel's going to the same house (though after her contract with him had expired) and helping to establish his rival. Such defections never failed to wound him, and that is why he has extolled so often in his writings loyalty of players to managers. It is a question whether the gift which he possessed for discovering and developing unsuspected talent for the stage did not require for its exercise such trials as now occurred; and whether the temporary loss he sustained might not be a very decided gain to the public, which loves better to welcome new candidates for its favor than consistently to support the old. It is quite in harmony with this view that we find the ambitious desiring to go out and reap the whole harvest of their talent for themselves without particular regard for the toil of the sower. In the field of labor called the stage, the harvest time is short, and there are sometimes long droughts, even in the season of popular favor.

It was during this period of hard work and heavy responsibilities that my brother's second boy was born, whom he named after us both, — Francis Augustin.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Excellent music by Mr. Dodworth's band was the prelude. Miss Fanny Morant then came before the

curtain and spoke the first half of an original address by Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes. At a certain point the curtain parted, disclosing the entire company ranged upon the stage, and Mr. Daly came forward and bowed in acknowledgment of the vociferous calls and the hearty public plaudits. The other half of Dr. Holmes' address was then spoken -- and that with excellent spirit and discretion by Mr. Frank Hardenbergh. 'The assembled company, a noble and interesting group, received emphatic recognition and welcome. There were twenty-eight persons on the stage." Thus, the foremost dramatic critic of the day described the opening of the new theatre on Thursday, December 3, 1873. Dr. Holmes' address was printed in all the leading daily newspapers, and is to be found in the edition of his complete works, under the title "Address for the opening of the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, December 3, 1873."

The opening address was the best feature of the night (except the faces on the stage), for the new play "Fortune," written expressly for the occasion by Albery, was disappointing to the last degree. This was utterly unexpected, and Daly now experienced, for the first time in his career, disappointment on the opening night of a season. His regret was all the greater as he had chosen my birthday for the inauguration of his new enterprise. His physical labors for forty-eight hours in preparing for the opening were so exhausting that he fell asleep for a moment behind the scenes during a part of the performance. However, before the play was over, he posted a notice calling his company for rehearsals of several old and recent favorites: "Old Heads and Young Hearts," "London Assurance," "New Year's Eve," and "Alixé"; and the succeeding week saw them all performed. In "Alixé"

It is probable that no other manager in the world has withdrawn so promptly pieces that failed to receive favor on a first performance. Theatrical records furnish innumerable instances of such failures converted into lasting successes. Beaumarchais' "Barber of Seville," produced a hundred years before, is a notable instance. The opening representation was hissed, the second rapturously applauded. To be sure the work was overhauled, cut and patched to cure its defects, but even then Madame du Deffand thought it detestable. The instinct of most managers who have spent labor and money upon a play is to persist in the conviction that it is worthy of the expenditure and that the public will ultimately come to its senses with regard to it. In England it has not been uncommon to see a play which has languished for several weeks suddenly begin to flourish, and at last outlive the most hopeful anticipation. There it is considered that the small percentage of patrons of the stage gathered on a first night (including the blasé and jaded habitués of such occasions) do not fairly represent the whole theatrical public. Daly was not content to wait for the merits of his productions to circulate slowly in the community.

Within two weeks after the unfortunate production of "Fortune," a new play from Paris, "The Parricide," was rehearsed and produced. This play had for theme one of those problems which absorb the readers of Gaboriau, du Boisgobey, and Conan Doyle. The murder of an elderly wealthy woman by a mysterious criminal is laid at the door first of her companion, an innocent young girl, and then of her son, a harmless *viveur* of the Parisian type. It was produced on December 17 with Fisher, Hardenbergh, Louis James, George Clarke, Sara Jewett, Marianne Conway, Nina Varian, Mrs. Gilbert, and Miss Morant.

But the event which Mr. Daly had in reserve for the season was the *début* of Miss Ada Dyas, who now arrived from England. Her engagement was made upon competent opinion that she was a "thoroughly trained leading actress of the best school." Wyndham thought so highly of her that he intended to bring her to America with a company. She added the distinction of good breeding and careful education to youth and a handsome and refined face and figure. She instantly won the favor of a very critical audience assembled at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, as *Anne Sylvester* in a revival of "Man and Wife" on January 3, 1874. *Anne Sylvester*, portrayed by Miss Morris as a passionate, emotional creature, was now represented as a woman of not less intense feeling, whose wrongs burned through a surface of womanly dignity and calm. She next appeared as the young married heroine of Sardou's recent Parisian success "La Maison Neuve," a satire upon young France breaking away from traditions in domestic and business life; the changing of the shop into the "Emporium" and the old-fashioned flat into the gorgeous apartment. Under the name of "Folline," the new play was given on January 27, 1874, with Miss Dyas in the title rôle.

A Shakespearian revival, the invariable feature of every Daly season, occurred on February 21. It was "Love's Labour's Lost," and was presented with an extraordinary list of performers. It was as great a novelty as any new play, for it had never before been seen by a New York audience, as we are informed by Richard Grant White and Joseph N. Ireland:

"118 East 10th Street

Febry. 15th, 1878.

My dear Sir

I never heard or read of *Love's Labour's Lost* having been

Theatre & indeed of any theatre, date only from 1845; but since that time I am sure the play has never been performed here, & indeed I have never heard of its having been performed anywhere within the memory of living men, which does not surprise me, considering the structure & dramatic motive of the play.

I thank you for your proffered compliment of a box on the first evening & shall hold myself disengaged.

With sincere wishes for your success on this occasion & all others

I am dear Sir

Yours very truly,

Richd. Grant White.

Augustin Daly Esqr."

Mr. Joseph N. Ireland, compiler of the authoritative "Records of the New York Stage," was positive that New York had never witnessed "Love's Labour's Lost." It was a delight to Daly to make his generation acquainted with anything that was rare in the Shakespearian drama. There was of course no hope of profit in the costly production of a work which had not tempted even Burton or Wallack. It was indeed a labor of love - not wholly lost.

Miss Ada Dyas was *The Princess of France*, Miss Fanny Davenport *Rosaline*, Miss Sara Jewett *Maria*, Miss Nina Varian *Katharine*, Miss Nellie Mortimer *Jaquenetta*, Miss Stella Congdon *Moth*, Davidge *Holofernes*, Fisher *Don Adriano de Armado*, Harkins *King of Navarre*, Clarke *Biron*, Louis James *Longaville*, Hart Conway *Dumain*, Hardenbergh *Boyet*, De Veau *Mercade*, Whitney *Sir Nathaniel*, Chapman *A Forester*, J. G. Peakes *Hiems*, Gilbert and Beekman *Lords*, James Lewis *Costard*, and Owen Fawcett *Dull*.

The lively Oakey Hall took it for granted that when his intelligent friend Daly deliberately brought out a play

there must be something interesting in it, and spent an hour or two reading "Love's Labour's Lost" (as nearly everybody did when it was announced) for the purpose of becoming familiar enough with the lines to enjoy the representation. The result in Mr. Hall's case was a pencilled note :

"Dear A.

. . I read myself stupid over L. L. Lost. Read it in 3 originals by aid of illustrations & notes, etc. A series of fine poetical readings, but won't you dress it up and write in some plot and fun and introduce three or four Charaktorr's! Adapt Shake. by all means & provide beds in the boxes.

Yours

O. K.

This is Sarkasm!"

There were two important pieces of the modern school which Mr. Daly had acquired for the present season, and which were to be produced in quick succession. One was "Charity," a serious comedy by W. S. Gilbert, and the other "Monsieur Alphonse," the work of Alexander Dumas *fil's*.

"Charity" was produced March 3, 1874, with a cloud upon it, cast by the unfavorable criticisms of the London press, which variously termed it "blurred and indefinite in results," "unsatisfactory and unpleasant," "tedious and morbid." Its presentation by Daly's Company showed it to be an absorbing play, growing in interest and power from scene to scene and act to act. Miss Dyas was *Mrs. Van Brugh*, Miss Davenport *Ruth Tredgett*, Miss Jewett *Eve*, Miss Griffiths *Caroline*, Harkins *Ted*, Hardenbergh *Smailey*, Clarke *Fred*, Lewis *Fitzpartington*, Davidge *Skinner*, and Chapman *Butler*. Every actor of a principal part made an individual hit; but the appearance of Miss

beauty, and comedy, in the rags of *Ruth Tredgett*, with matted, straggling hair and furtive, hunted eyes, acted upon the audience like an electric shock. As if recognizing immediately her true dramatic instincts and feeling the promise of power to come, they broke into the wildest welcome; and then watched with eagerness through the play the truth with which she struck every note of the character. The play ran for six weeks to most appreciative spectators after its production on March 12, 1874. It was then still running in England at the Haymarket.

"Monsieur Alphonse" succeeded "Charity," and was presented on April 14, 1874, by the same principals, supplemented by a remarkable little girl, Bijou Heron, the only child of the once famous Matilda Heron and the composer Stoepel. Mrs. Stoepel had at this time given up the stage and lost all her pupils, and had reached a stage of dejection which is distressingly set forth in the letters of her friends. In "Bijou" (Hélène Stoepel), however, she possessed a veritable treasure, whose grace and intelligence the new play introduced to audiences which still remembered her mother's notable début sixteen years before. "Monsieur Alphonse" was played forty-six times.

The final novelty of the season (after a brief revival of "Divorce" with Miss Dyas as *Fanny Ten Eyck*) was a dramatization of "Oliver Twist" with Bijou Heron as the innocent *Oliver*, Miss Davenport as the tragic *Nancy*, Davidge as *Bumble*, Fisher as *Fagin*, James Lewis as *The Artful Dodger*, and Louis James in the most realistic delineation of the ruffian *Bill Sykes* ever as yet seen on the New York stage, although it had witnessed many forceful impersonations of that forbidding character.

The theatre closed on June 6, 1874, and the company went out for a tour lasting until July 4. It had played



continuously forty-four weeks. Against what siege of troubles the manager had had to take up arms during that period has been already stated. The season began in a time of appalling financial distress, involved great financial burdens, was seriously threatened by desertions from his company, was disappointing in its opening, and yet witnessed some of his most striking managerial successes.

## CHAPTER XIII

Daly contracts his activities. Closes out the Broadway Theatre on terms. Will continue the Grand Opera House with Fox. Fox deserts the Opera House and opens the Broadway. Daly closes out the Opera House on terms. Account of the two theatres afterwards. Harrigan and Hart build the *Théâtre Comique* on Broadway. Their peculiar plays described. Poole and Donnelly make a cheap and popular theatre of the Grand Opera House. Daly helps Davenport in Philadelphia. Theatre in Albany. Miss Fanny Morant deserts to the Union Square. Miss Emily Rigl joins Daly's. Sol Smith Russell. Miss Anna Dickinson. Miss Kate Field. Engagement offered the Kendalls. Season of 1874-1875. "What Should She Do? Or Jealousy." "The Fast Family" a great hit. Daly's strong company. His leading women. Weakness of Wallack's. Montague imported. J. L. Toole brought over, and a failure. Wallack's opinion of the powerful competition. Shook & Palmer, and their disappointment with "The Sphynx." Daly needs plays. Bret Harte to be assisted by Boucicault. The latter's conference with Daly. Asks advice about "The Shaughraun." Doesn't think much of "The Two Orphans." Will collaborate with Bret Harte. His cast *raisonnée* for "Kentuck." Miss Ada Dyas goes. Daly puts on "The School for Scandal" with Miss Davenport as *Lady Teazle* and makes a hit. Excellent acting of James, Clarke, and Fisher. "The Hanging of the Crane" and "The Critic" not popular. Howard's "Moorcroft" a failure. Attacks on the press by the author. "The School for Scandal" revived. Clarke deserts in the middle of the performance.

EARLY this year, 1874, Daly became satisfied that his theories of management could not be operated in several theatres. It was utterly distasteful to him to be what he called a "janitor manager," opening the door for independent troupes and locking it after each disappeared. He closed the "Broadway" and began negotiations with A. T. Stewart's agent for the relinquishment of the re-

maining year of the lease. Mr. Stewart's agent quite readily entertained a proposition to take over the theatre with all its improvements and to take indorsed notes for the rent in arrears. The Grand Opera House remained. There was some attractiveness about getting up great productions there, and, with Fox as a feature in pantomime and spectacle, some hope of profit. But suddenly that popular comedian terminated his long engagement with his old friend Mr. Duff, and consequently with Mr. Daly, and withdrew from the Grand Opera House.

His purpose was quite a mystery until it was shortly after advertised that he was to take the theatre which Mr. Daly had just given up, and which was now to be called "Fox's Broadway Theatre." The smoothness of the late negotiations was now explained.

The loss of Fox closed any outlook for the Grand Opera House, and the obvious policy was to get out of an undertaking of which this last desertion had made Augustin heartily sick. So far, there had been sunk in the enterprise a hundred and twenty thousand dollars, including the fifteen thousand paid as bonus or premium for the lease, and the cost of the improvements. The proprietors of the property, The Erie Railway Company, under the new management which succeeded the extraordinary administration of James Fisk, Jr., consented to a surrender of the remainder of the term if the lessee also surrendered the scenery and properties and gave indorsed notes for the rent due. This arrangement was carried out.

It is instructive to glance at the subsequent history of the two theatres which Daly could not make profitable. In less than six weeks Fox failed at the Broadway and retired, defeated, from his venture. He had been for years receiving a salary of \$400 a week from Mr. Duff, but had recently conceived the idea that he had been slaving

while his manager was reposing upon a bed of roses, and that it was now time for the toiler to gather a fortune for himself instead of rolling it up for others. The result was not uncommon; he found that the art of acting and the art of management are utterly different gifts.

After Fox's failure the unfortunate theatre passed through sixteen different managements in five years with long intervals of darkness. Then Harrigan and Hart, two well-known variety actors, leased the ground, demolished the old church, and built a very handsome "New Théâtre Comique," in which for three years they produced with varying success Mr. Harrigan's peculiar plays; but as Christmas 1884 was approaching the theatre was burned to the ground. It was never rebuilt.

The Harrigan plays had neither plot nor coherence, but they drew audiences which seemed to spring from the ground. Irish and negro life in the congested districts, with their convivial meetings, weddings, excursions, feuds, and frolics, to which the simple German element (designated as "the Dutch") contributed their part, were the stock attractions, repeated over and over again under different names. Harrigan was usually the prosperous saloon keeper, conservative and sententious. Hart was at his best in petticoats as a wholesome kitchen-maid of sunny disposition. Two types of Hibernians were the roystering, reckless laborer on the "big pipes," and the parsimonious shopkeeper. In the negro quarter one saw with what solemnity the African took his amusements, and with what suddenness he passed from peace to war and developed unexpected social accomplishments with the razor. Nothing was extenuated or softened. At the steamboat dock the young street tough, with his equally tough slip of a girl, both well known to the ticket seller, approaches and tenders a five-dollar bill. The latter

gazes at it suspiciously and inquires, "Does your father know you've got this?" "Naw," is the reply, "he thinks my brother took it." And the couple pass on to a day of pastoral enjoyment.

The problem of making the huge Grand Opera House successful was also solved when a local patronage was created; but this was not until the house had had a checkered career under eight different managements and long intervals of abandonment. Then two men, Poole and Donnelly, opened the magnificent structure as a place of cheap amusement. They reduced the price of admission more than one-half; and whereas former managers were unable to make both ends meet with a rent of twenty-five thousand dollars, the new lessees could ultimately stand an enormous rental of fifty thousand dollars. The distinguished companies of Wallack's, the Union Square, and the Fifth Avenue frequently began or ended a fall or spring tour with an engagement of one or two weeks at the Grand Opera House, the art-loving populace of the West Side waiting patiently until the attractions of the costlier theatres could be witnessed from fifty-cent fauteuils. It may be mentioned, in connection with Mr. Daly's wise determination to concentrate his efforts upon one theatre, that he had for a little while helped Mr. F. L. Davenport's management in Philadelphia, and had even assisted an Albany theatre venture, but had declined an offer to manage a new opera house in Newark.

After the first season at the new theatre Miss Morant also went over to the Union Square. Before the season ended she had written to Mr. Daly :

"Since you have given the Madame Valorys ('Mothers with grown-up daughters') to your leading Juvenile Lady and the heavy character parts to your Comedy Lady I see nothing for me in the future but discontent and discomfort."

The allusions were, first to casting Miss Dyas in the parts of *Mrs. Van Brugh* in "Charity" and *Raymonde* in "Monsieur Alphonse," and next to giving Miss Davenport the rôles of *Ruth Tredgett* and *Mme. Guichard*. Miss Morant broke her contract and joined the forces of Shook & Palmer. An action was instituted by Mr. Daly against Miss Morant in the Superior Court in order to confirm the right to enjoin actors under contract with one manager from transferring their services to another. He obtained an injunction, which, however, he immediately waived; and he permitted Miss Morant to play in the rival establishment. It may be noticed here that Miss Kate Claxton had joined the forces there the preceding season, and so had George Parkes a year before. Miss Morant was therefore the sixth graduate of the Fifth Avenue Theatre to adorn the boards of the Union Square.

Two new names appeared on the company roll for the season of 1874-1875. Sol Smith Russell had been for some years a monologue entertainer whose imitation (among others) of the European lecturer Gough was a neat bit of mimicry; he now gratified a desire to have a regular dramatic training. And theatregoers who remembered the ballet of the "Black Crook" and the front row of pretty juvenile *coryphées* were agreeably surprised to learn that one of them, Miss Emily Rigl, had been studying for the English stage and was to appear this season at Daly's. Her sister, the première danseuse Betty Rigl, who divided with Mdles. Bonfanti and Sangalli the honors of that famous production, had, like so many of the troupe, become a permanent resident of the United States. Emily had been seen infrequently with her sister in ballet, but of late had been devoting herself to her new ambition, which intelligence, personal charm, and aptitude fully justified.

About this time the idea of embracing the theatrical profession was entertained by the distinguished political lecturer Miss Anna Dickinson, and Mr. Daly was thought by her to be a competent guide in such a delicate and momentous undertaking. A similar ambition on the part of Miss Kate Field, also well known in the ranks of lecturers and writers, brought her to Mr. Daly. Taglioni had urged her and Wallack had encouraged her to "adopt the footlights." It may be said briefly here that circumstances prevented both the ladies from making an appearance under my brother's management.

The earliest offers from an American manager to the Kendalls came from Mr. Daly. Through Mr. French he offered them a hundred pounds a week at his own theatre, for two seasons; three months to be devoted to starring, the profit of which was to be shared equally. The Kendalls asked for some additions, including four "benefits" of half gross receipts in seven months in New York. Six months afterwards Mr. Daly's offer was two hundred pounds a week. Mr. Kendall required two hundred and fifty; but soon all thoughts of coming to America were postponed, owing to the illness of Mrs. Kendall's mother. They did not visit the United States until many years afterwards, when their position on the English stage had grown to the importance, if not the eminence, once possessed by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean.

The season of 1874-1875 was opened with a new drama from the French of Edmond About, "*Germaine*," called "*What Should She Do; or Jealousy*." It was not a success. The story was morbid, but not so unpleasant as Octave Feuillet's "*Sphynx*," which was seen a month later at the Union Square with Miss Morris in the principal part, a part which her talent could not make endurable. Miss Davenport had the chief part in About's drama.

There is something mysterious in the effect of a first performance upon the material of a play. Up to that time it may have revealed nothing of structural weakness, it may have read like an absorbing novel, hurrying the reader from scene to scene, piling sensation upon sensation, bewildering by variety, and thrilling by appeal. Through the rehearsals it may seem to grow in cogency and force; the actors may strut in confident expectation of their "hits"; and yet, in that marvellous alembic of the first night, everything may vanish but dregs of dulness.

With his customary promptness the unsuccessful drama was withdrawn by Mr. Daly, and ten days after, a brilliant success was presented — Sardon's "*La Famille Benoiton*," adapted and called "*The Fast Family*," in which Miss Dyas was *Clothilde*, Miss Jewett *Blanche*, Harkins *Didier*, Louis James *Hector*, Jennings *Formichel*, Fawcett *Prudent*, Hardenbergh *Monsieur Benoiton*, Hart Conway his nephew *François*, Stella Congdon and Bijou Heron his young sons *Polydore* and *Fanfan*, and Emily Rigl and Nina Varian his daughters *Rose* and *Camille*. My brother wrote to me :

"New York, September 6, 1874.

. . . The Fast Family last night was quite a success. That is, it went off with roars of laughter — 2 recalls — and not a hitch before a \$900 house. So well was it received, in fact, that I am going to try it all the week; so as to give me more time on *The School for Scandal*. I do wish you could come down with Emma & see that revival. I think it will be a night of nights. I'll do it on Saturday the 12th. I have made a very good and close acting play and I think it will go."

It appears from this letter also that Miss Dyas did not like her part in "*The Fast Family*," "though," as the letter states, "she made a hit in it."



The immediate recovery from the failure of the opening piece proved that Mr. Daly possessed in his company a working force which no other theatre could boast, and which, in the then deplorable condition of theatricals, made his management conspicuous. His was the only theatre which possessed a leading woman for serious parts (Ada Dyas) and a leading woman for comedy (Fanny Davenport), three leading men, Clarke, Harkins, and Louis James, and four comedians, James Lewis, Hardenbergh, Davidge, and Fawcett. Wallack had to import a leading man, H. J. Montague, but was still without an actress of the necessary reputation and ability for principal rôles. A letter from Wallack a little later (when my brother was getting up the annual benefit for the Foundling Asylum) indicates how critical the veteran manager thought the period :

"I will do everything to aid you except act myself. You will, as a manager, I'm sure understand how much importance (in these days of powerful competition) my first appearance is to me. It represents more money than I could well afford to give."

A year before this, Edwin Booth had retired defeated from his own magnificent new theatre on the corner of Twenty-third Street and Sixth Avenue, and in May, 1874, the whole Booth interest was closed out and a lease given by Ames of Boston to Jarrett & Palmer; but those lessees had just met with a crushing reverse in the failure of Boucicault's "Belle Lamar." Wallack about the same time had brought to this country one of the famous old comedians of the English stage, J. L. Toole, and met with failure as thorough and disheartening as manager ever experienced. When he wrote the letter given above, he was experimenting with Montague with dubious results.

Not until November 14, when he gave up his theatre to Boucicault and "The Shaughraun," did the tide of fortune set his way. Shook & Palmer had a like experience. They brought out "The Sphinx" for Miss Morris, but had soon to replace that disagreeable play with "The Hunchback," in which she essayed *Julia*; and that was followed by other ventures, equally discouraging, until "The Two Orphans," produced on December 21, brought the management fortune.

All that Daly needed was a supply of plays. He had been relying upon Bret Harte, and now Boucicault, back from a long visit to Europe and looking for a job, took kindly to Harte's proposition to help put a Western legend into theatrical form. His "Belle Lamar" at Booth's was a disappointment, and to Mr. Daly he disclosed that he was engaged upon an Irish drama for Wallack. The period was to be that of the trouble that followed the abdication of James II, and the plot was to depict the serious struggle of a young English officer between his duty and his love for an accomplished and high-bred Irish girl. Boucicault felt that he had been long out of touch with the American public, and he sought Daly's advice as fellow playwright and manager, and my brother gave it with sincerity. He advised against the James II period, saying that the public would feel no sympathy for distress in big wigs and hooped petticoats. He further advised that the theme of the play should be if possible treated almost wholly from the humorous side, as the continued financial and business depression of the country turned for relief to the lighter theatrical amusements. The advice was followed, and so was Mr. Daly's suggestion of a play for the Fifth Avenue Theatre, to be called "The Bridal Tour." Boucicault agreed to begin upon it at once, and also to get to work with Bret Harte; and he gave his

opinion (a mistaken one) upon the merits of Shook & Palmer's projected "Two Orphans":

"The cast of the 2 orphans is strong:  
Maud Granger . . . Henriette and  
The Blind Girl . . . Claxton! ! ! !  
The *Blind* girl should be played by Palmer."

(Palmer was the manager of the theatre.)

"Now for Bret Harte! I saw him last night and agreed to re-shape Acts 1 and 2. . . to construct and detail Acts 3 and 4, which so far have not been shadowed, much less written. He comes here on Monday, by which time I shall have re-modelled Acts 1 & 2. I must do the society dialogue and scenes myself, as I think B. H.'s best work is *rough character* and *male*."

I propose to call the piece 'Kentuck.' The name is good familiar Brethartish. . . do you see Hardenbergh in it?

Yours faithfully

D. B.

About the joint terms for this piece. . . what are they to be? I have lost recollection of the matter and B. H. is dizzy on the same."

My dear Boucicault, "5th Ave. Theatre, Sept. 7.

The original terms between Harte and myself & which I still adhere to are: One hundred dollars per night or six hundred dollars per week. Matinées free unless they reach \$600, in which case \$50 is to be paid.

Yours truly

Augustin Daly.

I like the name of 'Kentuck' immensely."

"My dear Daly

Do send me a box for the first night of the School for Scandal.

I am afraid there is not room *for two* behind the terms you have made with Harte. . . and I must retire.

Yours ever

Dion Boucicault."

"My dear Daly

Why the blazes (pardon my Irish) don't B. H. speak distinctly?

I quite understand that you cannot afford to pay double price because *two names* are attached to Harte's play. But I cannot afford to work for half price.

The simple question is this — What advantage to you will result from the combination of our names — if any — ? then estimate that.

If none — then keep my name out of the transaction, and if Harte simply wants my architectural plans to work upon let me be paid *for that only* — leave me out of the bargain. Let the play be Harte's alone. He can take as much or as little of my plans as he likes — And you will pay me for helping him over the stile.

So I shall be released of all responsibility.

But if I am to compose and write as much of the play as I see I must do under present arrangements: Then \$50 a night would not pay me — and I should decline in dealing with Harte to accept a larger share than half — if he proposed such an arrangement.

Yours sincerely  
Dion Bouicault."

"20 East 15th St.  
Wednesday.

My dear Daly

I wrote you last night as clear and distinct a proposition as Euclid could have shaped.

I will now put it in a business shape.

You engaged Bret Harte to write you a play. — he began it — and found he could not construct such a work. He came to me to do it for him.

I undertake to put the piece into form — make a play of it — which he can clothe with dialogue.

For this work you shall pay me one thousand dollars, and I transfer to you all my right, title and share in the concern — my name is not to be associated with the matter.

My design and plot should be seen and approved by you before Harte begins upon the material I furnish — so that the work may proceed congenially.

There! is that a puzzle? To avoid all this enigmatical business — We three should have met and then there could have been no reserve or fog.

My position was plain from the first moment that Harte and I spoke of terms — viz.: — \$50 a night will not pay me for the amount of work I saw before me. — This I told him and I told you — Your terms for the piece are liberal enough — and if I were sole author I could have accepted them without demur.

But half a loaf is not bread enough for me.

Yours sincerely

Dion Boucicault."

"20 East 15th St.

Wedn. 9 Sept. 74.

My dear Daly

In reply to your offer contained in yours of this day I accept: —

Bret Harte and self will write conjointly the new American Drama. And for the privilege of playing the same at the 5th Avenue Theatre during the present season — you pay us 12 per cent of the gross receipts nightly, that is: — 6 per cent to me and 6 per cent to him.

The play shall be delivered to you as fast as it is completed act by act.

Yours sincerely

Dion Boucicault."

"To Augustin Daly Esq.

*Private:*

My dear Daly.

It was not without motive that I suggested to you in one of my letters that you should devote a stray hour to watch the progress of 'Kentuck' — Harte is dilatory and erratic. He is very anxious to get the work done — but thinks we can scurry

over the ground more rapidly than is consistent with safety. For your sake — as well as for ours — the piece should be carefully done. I have constructed a new first act — I send you a cast *raisonnée*.

With some difficulty I have made Harte promise to attend here every day at 4 o'clock.

Could you drop in here about Monday next between 4 and 6 and 'report progress' — make your remarks on the enclosed meanwhile.

Sincerely  
D. B "

The cast *raisonnée* made out by the famous dramatist and enclosed in his last epistle shows the Boucicault method :

Hardenbergh. "*Kentuck*." Aged 33. A bluff fellow who has a large claim on Sandy Bar, where he believes there is a rich mine. There is a tradition that the Spanish family that owned this place worked secretly a rich mine here for ages. Kentuck believes in the existence of this old mine. He is half cracked on the subject. He has taken to drink.

Clarke. *Oakhurst*. His partner, aged 26. A gambler — very cool, quiet — deeply attached to Kentuck — they hut together — he resists Kentuck's passion for drink.

James  
or  
Harkins. *Fanshawe*. Foreman of the mines at Sandy Bar; has discovered an *English speculator* in San Francisco — who will buy Sandy Bar — Fanshawe has excited this man on the subject —

and has brought him down to see the place — the other miners have agreed to sell out their claims — Kentucky refuses — holds out.

- Davidge.                      *Sir Ulysses Medlicott.* A conceited Englishman, City knight — who represents an English company of capitalists.
- Sara Jewett.                *Kate.* His daughter, in love with “Kentuck.”
- Lewis.                        *Telemachus.* His son — a cockney upstart — who despises anything American — a bragging fellow about his “British pluck” — but really a coward; not a bad fellow at heart.
- Mrs. Gilbert.              *Lady Medlicott.* A mournful, testy, vulgar woman complaining of everything she finds in the “horrible wilderness” — always warning Sir Ulysses that they will come to ruin.
- C. Fisher.                  *Don Diego Ruiz.* An old Spanish hidalgo who once owned the estate — has lost his wits by the invasion — still inhabits the ruined hacienda — himself a greater ruin. Thinks he is still master of the place — receives insult as compliment and is noble, courteous and dignified to the jeering miners.
- Fanny Davenport.        *Ooita.* His daughter — a Spanish girl — proud — irascible — hating the American — a wild & noble girl — in love with Oakhurst.

Parkes.  
Sol Russell.

*Boston.*  
*Flynn.*  
*Jemmy Bymon.*  
*Coscob.*

Miners — each with marked & distinct characters: the "scientific and sanguine" miner, the refined and disappointed miner, the rough and reckless miner.

At the moment when Daly deemed himself secure in the possession of the most perfect theatrical organization in the country and had only to provide the vehicle for its display, an unlooked-for desertion almost paralyzed his efforts. Miss Dyas left him and went to Wallack's. One of his oldest friends and staunchest supporters outside of his own family (also a friend of Wallack and of Miss Dyas) called upon him almost immediately after the successful production of "The Fast Family" to impart the intelligence that the lady was uncomfortable; that she was afraid her manager had been disappointed in her from the first; that she had wished to leave last season, but had yielded to the persuasion of her friends, and remained; that she had been used in her own country to a great deal of consideration, had been quite a little power in her sphere, and did not like the republic which Mr. Daly maintained in his theatre; and that she desired to be released. Mr. Daly knew at once that an engagement at Wallack's was waiting for Miss Dyas. There was no one to play the heroine in "The Shaughraun," and he recalled that a week or two before, Boucicault had written as if casually:

"... If Ada Dyas is not included in your programme for October I can place her for that month or for a longer time if it suits you."

It was manifest of course that there had been considerable negotiation going on, and that, the time being ripe, a dip-



lomatic agent had been selected who could impress upon the manager the alternative of yielding, or of facing an unyielding antagonism in his own establishment. The friendly representative took this occasion to say that in his opinion the manager's policy of not making a star of any member of his company was a mistake; that the public would have it, and that he would be compelled to yield. In a few days Miss Dyas was advertised as a member of Mr. Wallack's regular company.

The production of "The School for Scandal" at the Fifth Avenue on September 12, 1874, proved a brilliant success. The performance was witnessed by a crowded house and received enthusiastically. Miss Davenport was *Lady Teazle*, Fisher *Sir Peter*, Mrs. Gilbert *Mrs. Candour*, Davidge *Sir Oliver*, Hardenbergh *Crabtree*, Lewis *Moses*, Miss Jewett *Maria*, Clarke *Charles*, and Louis James *Joseph*. To Clarke and James a great share of the success was due. By them and Fisher the celebrated screen scene was so deftly worked up that it was practically divided in two parts by the applause and recalls of the audience — first when *Sir Peter* is forced into the closet, and next when *Lady Teazle* is discovered.

The play was reconstructed by Mr. Daly so as to present each act in a single scene. It had been remodelled for the Prince of Wales Theatre, so Mr. Daly had the authority of the London stage for meddling with the classic; but he discarded the English version and invented one of his own.

While Bronson Howard's "Moorcroft" was in rehearsal, the public was treated to a surprise, — a representation by tableaux of Longfellow's poem just published, "The Hanging of the Crane." The seven pictures described in the lines were shown as Harkins recited the poem, accompanied with incidental music by Dodworth. The scenes were painted by Witham, and the personages were repre-

sented by Ringgold, Fawcett, Davidge, Mrs. Gilbert, Miss Varian, and Miss Alice Grey. The evening's entertainment began with the comediotta of "The Two Widows," in which the four parts were taken by Miss Davenport, Miss Jewett, Clarke, and Hardenbergh; and concluded with a new version of Sheridan's "Critic," with James Lewis as *Puff*. The lack of favor shown by the public to this meritorious performance indicated the aversion of the American public to an entertainment consisting of "one act" pieces. After a week the poem was withdrawn for Bronson Howard's "Moorcroft."

"Moorcroft" barely survived for two weeks. The local press treated it as a sort of false claimant to the honors of the American drama. The following extract from one of the journals illustrates the hostile spirit in which the task of criticism was approached:

"We have the author's word for it that neither 'Saratoga' nor 'Moorcroft' is taken from the French. We are sorry for it. We had hoped both were. But he insists that in the deed of dullness he had no accomplice."

There were insinuations that the play had its origin in "Les Faux," a forgotten French play. This was a repetition of a rumor started by the *London Times*, and it compelled the author to publish a good-tempered answer. Mr. Daly would not let him wage an unsupported conflict with the press, and so he addressed on the same date (October 24, 1874) a letter to the *Herald* condemning the attitude of American journalists towards native dramatists. He showed the inconsistency of the lament over the absence of an "American drama" and the systematic condemnation of all attempts in that direction; saying that there will be no indigenous growth if the young shoots are pulled up by the roots and the cultivators are driven from the

field; and affirming that the only people who endeavored to establish an American drama were authors and managers, without any assistance from journalists, and particularly dramatic critics. He instanced "Belle Lamar," the characters and incidents of which were taken from the late Civil War, but which was denied all claim to the title of American, "because — mark the reason! — the incidents might have occurred in any other country"; he also referred to "The Gilded Age," considered as having a doubtful claim to the same title because there was only *one* distinctively American character in it, that of *Colonel Sellers*; and he summed up in the phrase, "American press writers are proud of everything American except other American writers."

The unlooked for failure of "Moorcroft" compelled the manager to fall back upon his brilliant production of "The School for Scandal," which was accordingly revived on November 2; but this resource was immediately cut off by the singular behavior of George Clarke (*Charles Surface*) who, irritated by a reproof from his manager, left the theatre before the play was over. The reproof was for disregard of the rule that no beards or mustaches were to be worn in the comedy. Clarke, who had always previously observed this requirement, thought that a revival for two nights did not demand the sacrifice of a mustache which had embellished "Moorcroft," and affronted the public by leaving his performance unfinished. More than this, he allowed himself to be interviewed by reporters and to predict the downfall of the arbitrary reign of Daly. A few months later he wrote a letter to Mr. Daly expressing his regret.

## CHAPTER XIV

Daly sets out to make up for unexpected defections. His production of "The School for Scandal" a pronounced hit, but everything after it fails. "The Belle's Stratagem," "Everybody's Friend," "The Heart of Midlothian." Not three weeks' paying business in three months. Remarkable play from the Spanish produced. Louis James as "Yorick." Judge Van Brunt's opinion of the public. Henry Bergh's appreciation. "London Assurance," "She Stoops to Conquer," "Man and Wife" and "Monsieur Alphonse" wasted. E. L. Davenport's splendid acting in "A New Way to Pay Old Debts" unavailing. Miss Carlotta Leclercq in "Pygmalion and Galatea" and "The Palace of Truth." She plays *Portia* to Davenport's "Shylock." Financial stress. The company on half salaries. Gossip of the street. Downfall of Daly predicted. Engagement of Stephen Fiske as business manager. "Women of the Day." Sudden change with the production of "The Big Bonanza." First appearance of John Drew under Daly's management. A hundred nights. The company now much sought after for benefits. Ringgold and Montague want Miss Davenport to play for them. Her benefit. Mrs. Gilbert's. Little Bijou Heron. Mrs. Alice Dunning Lingard. Restored friendship with Clara Morris. Fanny Davenport and her \$1000. The DeVeres. Actors' children and what happens. Sydney Cowell engaged. First trip to San Francisco. Poor quarters. Chinatown. Virginia City and the Bonanza mine. Salt Lake City. Brigham Young.

"THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL" was immediately replaced by "The Belle's Stratagem," which had been rehearsed for emergencies, and Miss Davenport as *Letitia Hardy* and Louis James as *Doricourt* gave a spirited performance.<sup>1</sup> "Masks and Faces" brought out Mrs. J. H. (Louise) Allen for the first time in several years.<sup>2</sup> "Everybody's Friend" gave Lewis an opportunity to create a new *Major*

<sup>1</sup> Nov. 4, 1874.

<sup>2</sup> Nov. 10, 1874.

*De Boots*,<sup>1</sup> and finally the rehearsals (superintended by Boucicault himself when he could tear himself away from "The Shaughraun") of "The Heart of Midlothian" ended in the elaborate production of that play.<sup>2</sup> All these ventures were played to diminishing houses, and the deficit in running expenses increased enormously. In three months there had been hardly more than three weeks of remunerative business. Boucicault's play lived barely two weeks, and ran behind from the start; yet in the worry and anxiety of this period the manager was able to give his personal effort to the production of a genuine work of art — a notable Spanish play known as "Yorick."

As "Un Drama Nuevo" ("A New Play"), produced in 1867 in Madrid, it was not only a tremendous acting success, but found a reading public which demanded four editions of the published work in the same year. The fanciful story is that Yorick, Hamlet's old acquaintance of infinite jest, was not a mere court buffoon, but a contemporary player and popular favorite. The "new play" is an original tragedy accepted by Shakespeare for performance at his own theatre. Its plot is the discovery by *Count Octavio* of the perfidy of his wife *Beatrice* with his false friend and adopted son *Manfred*, disclosed by the jealousy of the villain *Landulph*. The comedian of the Shakespeare company, *Yorick*, is possessed with the ambition to play a tragic part, and persuades Shakespeare to take the rôle of Octavio from the leading man *Walton* and give it to him. *Walton* conceives a fiendish scheme to ruin the performance and wreck the peace of the too ambitious *Yorick*. In the scene in which *Count Octavio* receives a letter apprising him of the frailty of the *Countess* and the perfidy of *Manfred*, *Walton* substitutes for the property missive a communication revealing to *Yorick*

<sup>1</sup> Nov. 20, 1874.<sup>2</sup> Nov. 21, 1874.

his betrayal by his own wife (acting the part of the *Countess*) and his pupil and friend *Edmund* (who is cast for *Manfred*). Thus a real drama of jealousy and treachery is enacted in the very scenes and by the characters of the acted play. *Walton's* baseness, however, only partly succeeds. It tortures *Yorick* to madness, but *Yorick's* passion, now real instead of simulated, renders the mimic scene almost insupportably true to nature. *Yorick* expires after an attempt to kill his wife and *Edmund*.

The value of the piece as an acting play was unquestionable. Its presentation required an actor of the first ability. The manager had already sounded the possibilities of Louis James, and knew that he could go far if he devoted himself with sincerity to his art. To him he awarded the rôle of *Yorick*, passing over (a singular coincidence of play with fact) the claims of Harkins as leading man. The artistic results fully justified his choice, and James, inspired with the confidence of his manager and the greatness of his part, surpassed all expectations on the opening night,<sup>1</sup> and disclosed the tragic power which, in a later period, he was generally acknowledged to possess. But the manager did not reckon with the incredulity of press and public, which refused to believe in the value of a tragedy that had no well-known tragedian for its interpreter. The season had already witnessed some starvation receipts, but the lowest level was now reached. Disgusted with the desertion of the public, after a trial of one week the manager indignantly tore off the play and consigned the manuscript to his library shelves.

And yet the play and the manager and the actors deserved unstinted praise and support. Judge Van Brunt, who may be remembered as a plain-spoken man, went to the play, saw the empty house, and set down the public

<sup>1</sup> Dec. 5, 1874.

as asses. He said to me years afterwards: "The best play your brother ever produced met with the worst reception!" Henry Bergh wrote a letter which conveys better than I can the impression made by the play upon cultivated minds:

"From the rising of your elegant curtain, until the last scene, and word, uttered, my attention was riveted to the stage. If I am capable of appreciating dramatic excellence and acting, I do not hesitate to declare that it would be impossible to present to the public a more truly enjoyable performance than that I witnessed last night. The play itself would add to the incomparable fame of the great Shakespeare himself. The acting was exceptionally great — while the *mise en scène*, and costumes, left nothing to desire. The part of Yorick, as rendered by Mr. James, raises him to a level of the greatest artists of his time — while the elegant and refined lady who portrayed so touchingly the distracted wife, (Mrs. Jewett,) was entirely admirable. . . .

The purpose of this letter is to request you to delay the removal from your Stage of these beautiful pieces until the public have had an opportunity to judge for themselves. . . . If the equivocal and sensational rubbish which theatre-going people are made to endure nowadays is to be substituted for such a performance as I witnessed at your house last night — then farewell to the legitimate drama.

I am

dear Sir

Yours faithfully

Henry Bergh.

P.S. I have sent a copy of this to the Times for publication.<sup>1</sup>

Nor were the leading men of the profession blind to its merits. Davenport wrote that it was "full of dramatic beauty and poetry," and Lawrence Barrett applied for the right to produce it in New Orleans, Boston, Philadel-

phia, and San Francisco. In later years, as "Yorick's Love," it had a fixed place in his repertoire; but in his acting version, his reverence for Shakespeare induced him to substitute Thomas Heywood as the manager. At the Fifth Avenue Fisher was *Shakespeare*, made up after the intellectual and aristocratic Chandos portrait, Hardenbergh the envious and malignant *Walton*, Ringgold *Manfred*, Sara Jewett the wife *Alison*, Miss Mortimer *Margery*, and Jennings *The Prompter*. To Lewis was given the only humorous part in the play, that of *The Author* — a character always the butt of the dramatist, though why, Heaven knows! In the gloom and depression caused by the slaughter of this remarkable play, the manager had the grim satisfaction of observing that none of his critics noticed the anachronism of a female player on Shakespeare's stage!

The beautiful theatre seemed suddenly to have sunk into a groove of ill luck. "London Assurance," "She Stoops to Conquer," "Man and Wife," and "Monsieur Alphonse," put on in quick succession, could not pry it out. Then the manager took his principal people on tour and brought in stars to exert a temporary benign influence. E. L. Davenport appeared in a revival of Massinger's "A New Way to Pay Old Debts,"<sup>1</sup> one of the greatest impersonations of *Sir Giles Overreach* the stage had seen — it drew the veteran actor and manager, William Wheatley, out of his retirement. Then Miss Carlotta Leclercq came in "Pygmalion and Galatea"<sup>2</sup> and "The Palace of Truth," and both stars united in a presentation of "The Merchant of Venice."<sup>3</sup>

During this time the finances of the theatre had to be maintained by loans, and for a time the company cheerfully agreed to be put on half salaries. The financial

<sup>1</sup> Dec. 21, 1874.<sup>2</sup> Dec. 28, 1874.<sup>3</sup> Jan. 11, 1875.



matters were kept reasonably quiet. The old and experienced Davidge put the matter very convincingly to his fellow players. They resented, too, the gossip of the street, by which the débacle of the management was predicted, and the genius, skill, and efficiency of rival establishments were exalted.

Among Daly's new arrangements was the securing of a new business manager, Stephen Fiske, who had just given up the management of the St. James Theatre, London. Having the fullest confidence in Daly, he predicted that in six weeks they would be "turning people away."

"Women of the Day," a well-written comedy by an old actor, Charles Morton of Philadelphia, brought the company home,<sup>1</sup> and then occurred one of those happy events that change the face of fortune. Von Moser, a noted German playwright, had written a farce that tickled the Berliners and Viennese immensely, for it ridiculed the passion for senseless speculation which set in with the Germans after their intoxicating success in the Franco-Prussian campaign of 1870-1871. Neuendorf, manager of the German theatre in New York, called Daly's attention to the play.

Daly had just the company to play it, and he was just the man to reconstruct it as an American story of the foolhardy speculation from the effects of which our country was suffering. Lewis was the crabbed professor, representative of "brains" as opposed to "money," and an admirable foil to his brother-in-law (Fisher), an amiable plutocrat. But the satirical side was the least attractive of the play. Two pairs of young lovers made the charm of the evening; the impecunious young rolling stone *Bob*, his sedate and struggling chum *Jack*, and the goddesses of their affections, *Eugenia* (Miss Davenport) and *Virginia* (Miss Rigl).

<sup>1</sup> Jan. 20, 1875.

For the part of the impecunious and light-hearted *Bob* Mr. Daly brought from Philadelphia young John Drew, then playing his first engagement at his mother's theatre. It was again one of the Daly surprises - to give a novice a leading part in a metropolitan theatre. Von Moser's play was produced under the title of "The Big Bonanza," and on February 17, 1875, Drew made his first appearance in New York under the manager with whom he was to remain for many years. The finish of his later performances was not to be found in this one, but there was all their intelligence, added to the exuberant spirits of youth. It was a joyous performance. The archness and beauty of Miss Davenport and Miss Rigl were well mated with the ardor of Drew and Ringgold. It is not easy to forget the first call of the impecunious *Bob* upon his inamorata with a surprisingly fine suit of clothes and a very perceptible limp. He explains in a single line of soliloquy, after sending up his card: "Jack's clothes fit me pretty well, but his shoes —!"

Lewis and Mrs. Gilbert had two of those parts which later made the Daly plays famous. His sage remarks (and hers) upon the various stocks in which he was blindly investing, were the joy of the house for a hundred nights.

The play ran to the end of the season. The stage of the Fifth Avenue was full of sunshine. Its company was again esteemed the most desirable in the profession. Jarrett & Palmer vainly begged Daly for Miss Emily Rigl for *Princess Katharine* in "Henry V" at Booth's, with George Rignold as the star. She would have been perfection in it. It was the period of benefits. Montague for his fête selected "London Assurance," and asked for Miss Davenport to play *Lady Gay Spanker*, Lewis for *Meddle*, Fisher for *Sir Harcourt*, and Davidge for *Max*. Rignold's benefit took place later at Booth's, and Mr. Daly allowed



MRS. G. H. GILBERT



Miss Davenport to play *Pauline* to his *Claude Melnotte*. For the few months in which he appeared in "Henry V," Rignold caused a sort of madness among theatregoers. At the benefit in question he gave "Blackeyed Susan" as an after-piece, and women fainted with emotion.

Mrs. Lingard, the wife of William Horace Lingard, better known as Alice Dunning, was in Mr. Daly's company, having joined with a view to her *début* on the legitimate stage, and was waiting for a play worthy of her ambition and her gifts. Rignold asked Mr. Daly to let her play *Blackeyed Susan*, but it was out of the question to allow her to make her first appearance on such an occasion, and so the part of *Susan* was bestowed upon Miss Maude Granger, who subsequently created the title rôle in Sardou's "Dora" ("Diplomacy") at Wallack's in 1878.

Miss Davenport, of course, had a benefit in "The Hunchback," as *Julia*, with Montague as *Clifford*, Rignold as *Modus*, and Frank Mayo as *Master Walter*. Then Mrs. Gilbert had her benefit with Rignold and Miss Davenport in "The Lady of Lyons," and John Brougham his as *O'Callaghan* in the old-fashioned, Irish, gentlemanly farce, "His Last Legs." A dainty bit of child acting was furnished by the juvenile Bijou Heron as *Romeo* to little Fay Templeton's *Juliet* in the balcony scene.

With regard to another benefit performance, the manager received this letter :

"N. Y. Jan. 7th, 1875.

My dear Mr Daly

I am just informed that you have consented to spare Bijou for her little entertainment at Union Square Theatre.

I can but say that this (is) another evidence of the noble manner in which you have taken interest in her since you first took her by the hand. To say I am grateful were meagre thanks in sounding words, but I have that in my heart which

thanks you in silence, but with a warmth of gratitude unspoken but faithful as the flood which flows through it. I pray Heaven it may be ever in my power to aid in some way on my own humble part to your prosperity.

God bless you.

Matilda Heron."

In the retrospect of the passing season, the pleasing recollection remains of a renewal of friendly relations with Miss Clara Morris. As in the case of Miss Agnes Ethel, Mr. Daly had accorded her the privilege of playing his copy-righted versions of the plays in which she had made her reputation in his theatre. On January 1, Miss Morris added to her letter enclosing royalties a postscript: "May I wish you a happy New Year? I do so with all my heart. C. M."

The success of "The Big Bonanza" enabled the manager to reward the loyalty of his company. Here is one acknowledgment:

"May 12th, 1875.

My dear Mr. Daly

A thousand thanks for your or rather 'my thousand dollars.' What a nest egg. How I hope it is but one of thousands of thousands that I bring to you. If a woman's determination, energy, talents & gratitude can thank you the future will show you.

Ever sincerely

Fanny Davenport."

Miss Davenport had excellent training in the duty owed by actor to manager from her mother, a member of the Vining family, and from her distinguished step-father whose name she bore. Her theatrical experience began with her first appearance as a child for his benefit at Niblo's Garden in 1863, as Charles I in "Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady."

Few persons know at what sacrifice the lesser members of a troupe sometimes leave their homes to fill unexpected demands. One of the most reliable couples in Mr. Daly's employ were Mr. and Mrs. De Vere, the parents of six children. The exigencies of a New Orleans engagement required their instant departure from New York, and they made a hurried arrangement with a motherly person to look after the flock. No sooner were the parents out of sight than the enfranchised youngsters mutinied, and got up a negro minstrel show in the apartment with the assistance of equally unruly neighbors, to the delectation of a crowd of youthful invaders invited from the street. The racket, din, and destruction drove out the motherly person, who disappeared and did not dare to reappear. Kind-hearted neighbors soon realized the situation, and cared for the children until the return of their parents after an extended absence. No wonder poor Mrs. De Vere, when a subsequent sudden departure was proposed, wrote :

My dear Sir

"Sunday.

To leave my house and children alone again is something terrible. I went for two weeks and suffered untold anxiety; to leave again at once without preparation or time to make any, is more than I supposed it possible you could ask me. If you will give me your word of honor I shall return on Wednesday, I will go. Awaiting reply

Yours very truly

Nellie Mortimer De Vere."

Additions were made to the company. One of the most noticeable was Miss Sydney Cowell, a capable and experienced young actress of what, in the old "lines of business," were called "Chambermaid" parts — impossible characters who in old comedies invent plans for deceiving unreasonable guardians, aiding sincere lovers, and effecting

indispensable elopements; and who, after conferring lasting happiness on the deserving, are rewarded with the hand of the vulgar lout called "the comic man." There were offers of which Mr. Daly did not avail himself. The agents of Mr. Montague wrote that at the expiration of the run of "Clancarty" at Wallack's he would be free to engage elsewhere. The well-known John T. Raymond (Colonel Sellers) applied for himself and wife.

There was no lack of plays. They came from Henry Bergh ("Peculiar People"), Davidge ("Our Circle"), Henry Morford ("Mothers-in-Law"), Edouard Cadol ("Grandmamma,"—through Coudert Brothers, which was accepted), and H. J. Byron ("Our Boys,"—through T. H. French, — also accepted).

An extraordinary venture for that age (1875) was taking the whole Fifth Avenue Theatre Company to the Pacific coast. They arrived in San Francisco July 21, and found it "cold-hearted." As every regular theatre was occupied they had to play in a concert hall and fit their scenery to its platform. Augustin was soon in despair with Platt's Hall:

"I would as soon fasten my scenery to the ceiling of a parlor . . . I hired it for two nights, and then finding Maguire's Minstrel Hall unoccupied, I hired that at the rental of \$500 per week. To this the people have come in partial numbers. . . . California may be the land of milk and honey, but San Francisco as I have found it so far is the city of gall and vinegar."

He found illiberal criticisms and sneers in the press which he attributed to rivals on the ground.

The sensation for a tourist in San Francisco was to be escorted through Chinatown by the police, and he describes the experience:



"Within a block and a half of the very Wall Street of this City you walk into a maze of streets & alleys which swarm with another people and quiver with a new life & other motives. Strangely enough, the only Europeans you meet in this quarter appear to be simply sightseers like yourself. The few squares out of the very heart of the city which are given up to these Asiatics seem to be wholly surrendered to them; & no other stores, no other dwellings, no other announcements, no other business, pleasure, customs or manners are to be met with over a stretch of city which is but two blocks wide by about seven long.

I wandered over this strange city within a city last Sunday afternoon — and passing in an instant out of the quiet & repose of the Christian town I was plunged at once into a very hive of active busy bees, all crowd, all bustle, but noiseless & harmless. Every shop was open & the sidewalks & the buildings swarmed with Chinese in their native garb. I watched the gamblers buying in a lottery & I noted the eager opium drunkard purchasing his thimble-full of ecstasy & hurrying homeward with his treasure. Tailors were hard at work, none disdaining the 'Melican' sewing machine, & cobblers on the sidewalk patching up the high-soled shoes. The basements seemed given up to the barber fraternity, & in every other one I saw the natives getting their heads shaved. The butcher & baker shops were all full of custom too, & the little scraps of dirty raw & dirtier cooked meats that were displayed & bought & sold drove me at last by their odors to my own civilized atmosphere. At night, I took in the Chinese theatre, both before and behind the scenes, but of that — anon."

In the third week the manager still complained of the indifference of the press, which he ascribed either to partisanship or inability to appreciate the school of acting which he had brought from the East, while acknowledging that he had a sure (though small) circle of intelligent patrons which attended nearly every performance. Each production made an emphatic success with these audiences,

but elicited not even decent treatment from the papers. Yet Virginia City and Salt Lake City were warmly appreciative. The fact is that the discouraging result of the San Francisco trip must remain a mystery.

He and his company were taken down into the mines of Virginia City to pick up specimens of the *Bonanza* with their own hands. In Salt Lake City the public was enthusiastic :

“Salt Lake City, August 22/75.

. . . The people cried for more of us, and I'm sorry we could not stay. I called on Brigham (Young) yesterday and met General Sheridan and invited him to the theatre in the evening. Brigham has attended every performance, and when I saw him he said that the performance of 'Saratoga' was the first 'live theatre' he had seen for ten years. He is a shaky old man, and I guess hasn't got above ten years more 'wickedness' into him. The theatre is a very fine one, very much like the old Bowery in its best days. The town and houses remind me much of a Southern city — very dusty and dowdy, and a mountain spring gives a rivulet to each main street which runs perpetually in the place where gutters usually are. I attended the tabernacle to-day and heard Apostle Hyde discourse on the holiness of Mormonism — saw the wives and the elders, and a 'sicker' looking set I never beheld.”

## CHAPTER XV

First engagement of the Vokes with Daly. "The Big Bonanza." The Mexican Juvenile Opera Troupe and infant prima donna. Company engaged by Daly for season of 1875-1876. Barrymore and Miss Jeffreys Lewis. Opening play enjoined by Wallack and "Saratoga" substituted. John Brougham's prologue. Oakley Hall appears for Wallack. Injunction dissolved. "Our Boys" produced — a great hit. Edwin Booth's engagement postponed. Booth's preparations. His idea of "light" parts. His first appearance since his theatre was closed. Gratifying reception. "Richard II" after fifty years. Receipts of performance. Miss Davenport plays *Pauline* and *Katherine*. Daly's observations. Re-entry of Miss Clara Morris in "The New Leah." Retires after one week. Stop-gaps. Psychology of audiences. Production of "Pique." It is given 238 times. Libels and a libel suit. Chief-Justice Daly cross-examined. George the Count Joannes anxious to testify. Visitors to the play. Miss Davenport's opportunity at last. Offenbach. Burning of Castle Garden. Anniversary of the "Melville Troupe." End of the long run of "Pique." Miss Georgiana Drew joins the company. Benefits for the chief performers. Also for the manager, who has an illumination and an accident. Sleighride and supper. The great Moody and Sankey revival. Herr Cline. Daly's only portrait. Daughter of James W. Lingard. A spectre of the past, Edward Eddy. Death of Charlotte Cushman, A. T. Stewart, and Barney Williams. Conflict of laws. Début of Mayor Hall as an actor, and the result. Miss Anna Dickinson. Bret Harte at work upon a play. A drama by Justice Barrett and Mrs. Barrett. Wallack accepts it. Produced seven years later and played for two weeks.

WHILE the company was in San Francisco, the bright and attractive troupe known as "The Vokes" began in August (1875) at the Fifth Avenue Theatre with the well-known "Belles of the Kitchen" and followed with "A Bunch of Berries." All the Vokes appeared — Frederick, Fawdon, Jessie, Victoria, and Rosina — the

latter then as afterwards aptly described as "full of fun, merriment and mischief." When they left, there was sufficient of the Daly Company on the spot to give a performance of "The Big Bonanza" with a wholly new cast - Owen Fawcett playing Lewis' part, Whiting Fisher's, Miss Jewett Miss Davenport's, and Mr. Maurice Barrymore Mr. Drew's. This was Barrymore's début, and Mr. Daly notes that he was "liked fairly." Then there was a "Mexican Juvenile Opera Troupe" of child vocalists under ten years of age. They gave "La Grande Duchesse" in marvellously entertaining style, the prima donna Nina Carmen y Moron being a finished actor of eight years, and the *Wanda*, Nina Guadeloupe, aged six, carrying off most of the honors.

As given in the bills of the play, Daly's Company this season, 1875-1876, comprised :

Miss Clara Morris

" Fanny Davenport

" Jeffreys Lewis

" Sara Jewett

" Emily Rigl

" Alice Grey

" Nellie Mortimer

" Sydney Cowell

" May Nuney

" Kate Holland

" Florence Wood

" Stella Congdon

" Fanny Francis

" Clara Jamieson

" Josephine Bonne

" Mary Bowne

" A. Griffiths

" Bijou Heron

Mrs. G. H. Gilbert

Mr. John Brougham

Mr. James Lewis

" William Davidge

" Charles Fisher

" D. H. Harkins

" Frank Hardenbergh

" Maurice Barrymore

" John Drew

" D. Whiting

" G. F. De Vere

" George Parkes

" Charles Rockwell

" B. T. Ringgold

" Owen Fawcett

" F. Chapman

" Frank Bennett

" F. De Veau

" Geo. Gilbert

" Beekman

" Eytinge

" John Moore, Stage Manager

Such a force is unheard of in these days, when theatrical management is in the hands, not of a single person with one theatre, but of a commercial concern with a "chain of theatres," each of its "stands" being supplied in turn with a play and a company strictly limited to the requirements of that piece. With such thrifty management a play can be continued to comparatively small business for a long time without loss. It required full houses, however, to pay the expenses of companies like Wallack's, Daly's, and the Union Square, which had to be engaged for the season and to be adapted to every change of entertainment. Mr. Daly's range of plays, embracing the emotional, the melodramatic, Shakespeare, old comedy, and now German modern comedy, required more than an ordinary stock force. Clara Morris was to appear in a brief engagement, and she was to be announced as a member of the company. Maurice Barrymore was from London, as was Miss Jeffreys Lewis. Miss Lewis had appeared two years before at the Lyceum Theatre in a version of Hugo's great romance "Notre Dame." She was a beauty of the Spanish type, admirably fitted for *Esmeralda*, and was as pleasing in dramatic parts as her *petite* blond sister Catherine became in musical pieces four years later at Daly's.

The opening play was to be H. J. Byron's "Our Boys," but an injunction procured by Wallack restrained its production, and the old favorite "Saratoga" was revived on less than a week's notice,<sup>1</sup> with a capital prologue written and spoken by John Brougham, in which the above-mentioned law proceedings are referred to:

It strikes me now that something I should say  
About the recent much disputed play;

And so I would, but it is hard to tell  
 The facts. What with Michaelis and Michel,  
 The French in France and French here in New York,  
 With all the legal enigmatic work  
 Of affidavits and injunctions many  
 (I wonder if they're understood by any)  
 So warped and twisted, that, beyond a doubt,  
 The rights or wrongs no fellow can make out.  
 Old York and Lancaster once came to blows,  
 And the fierce conflict from two roses rose.  
 One Rose, through agents, and sub-agents, now  
 Arouses a right royal kind of row  
 By selling to two parties, nothing loath,  
 And in the sale, of course, including both.  
 The very smartest salesman you might get, or  
 Colonel Sellers, couldn't sell them better.  
 Why they don't pass a law such things to stop  
 And simplify the literary swap,  
 Leaving no loophole for chicane to use,  
 But plainly say what's what and which is whose, —  
 Nor fill with gall the managerial cup,  
 Is — a conundrum, and I give it up.  
 Meanwhile our chief, to all this adverse luck  
 Opposes his indomitable pluck,  
 Untiring industry and active brain,  
 With courage resolute, to yet maintain  
 The fight against all odds, and will prevail.  
 His lexicon "knows no such word as 'fail.'"

Before the week was out, the litigation was disposed  
 of in favor of Mr. Daly. Mr. Wallack's side was pre-  
 sented by A. Oakey Hall, but the injunction which he  
 had procured for Wallack was dissolved on the hearing  
 by Justice Charles Donohue. The question was whether  
 Mr. French, the agent of Mr. Byron, had authority to  
 sell the play to Wallack in case the terms of a prior sale

to Daly had not been complied with to French's satisfaction. The case turned upon the wording of the written power held by the latter, and it was found to be limited actually to a sale to Daly, and that that sale had already been made admitted of no dispute. "Our Boys" being thus released, it was immediately produced at the Fifth Avenue.<sup>1</sup>

Its success showed how undying is the interest attaching to the oldest themes of the drama. Two youths of widely different temperaments and ranks of society fall in love with charming girls who are not the wives picked out for them by their stern parents. As the youths firmly persist in choosing love with poverty in preference to riches without affection, the obstinate parents after a long struggle are forced to surrender. Such is the simple but eternal tale, and the whole world (excepting parents immediately interested) is found to be in sympathy with the impulses of the heart. Maurice Barrymore was cordially accepted in the rôle of the honest, obtuse, "pig-headed," and faithful *Talbot Champneys*, who disappoints his father *Sir Geoffrey* by offering himself to the penniless but clever *Mary Melrose*. As for the representative of that bewitching young lady, it was observed that there was "no one living who could play parts such as *Mary Melrose* like Fanny Davenport."<sup>2</sup> Harkins, as the spirited and progressive son of the millionaire retired butterman *Middlewick*, was the impassioned lover of the aristocratic and sentimental *Violet*, portrayed by Miss Jeffreys Lewis. The irate parents, Fisher and Lewis, representing antagonisms in the social order, found a common bond in their determination to disinherit their rebellious offspring.

Popular as well as critical favor was immediately ex-

<sup>1</sup> Sept. 18, 1875.

<sup>2</sup> *N. Y. Times.*

tended to the play, which was as brightly written as it was happily conceived. C. W. Carleton, the publisher, wrote of "a delightful couple of hours" spent in witnessing it. Oakley Hall said to me: "It was well worth fighting for, wasn't it?" It was so well worth it that when it was played in Cincinnati by a Daly company a further attempt was made to enjoin it, and Fiske was sent out to protect it, and succeeded. Two offshoots of the company went touring this season — one headed by Miss Jewett giving "The Big Bonanza," and the other later, led by James Lewis, playing "Our Boys."

Edwin Booth was to appear on October third to fill an engagement made in June, but Mr. Booth unfortunately met with an accident which delayed his appearance until the twenty-fifth. The accident occurred at Booth's summer home, Cos Cob, Connecticut, early in September. He was thrown from his carriage, his arm broken, and internal injuries sustained from which at first the gravest results were feared. Happily they were not realized, but he was confined to his house for nearly two months. The engagement with Daly was by letter, and it will be seen what Booth regarded as strenuous parts and light ones:

"Cos Cob, Conn., June 2d, 1875.

Augustin Daly, Esqr.

Dear Sir,

Mr. McVicker submitted to me your two propositions for an engagement of six weeks (beginning Octr. 4th) at your theatre, viz:

Six thousand dollars per week (seven performances) or: Half the gross receipts up to fifteen hundred dollars and two thirds of all over that amount. Either will satisfy me, and I leave to you the preference.

I would like to have your reply to this, (stating your choice



of the terms you offer) a list of the characters you wish me to perform and the names of the principal ladies & gentlemen you will furnish.

All necessary information regarding costumes & scenery for the plays you select I will be ready to give your artists at any time you may appoint.

I think it advisable to change the bill frequently — I am not loath to work 'my hardest,' but when I perform a 'heavy' part at the matinée I must have a light one for the evening or vice versa. The following are the characters which comprise my repertory. Those marked 'light' are good for matinées or Saturday nights.

Hamlet	
Shylock.....	Light
Macbeth	
Othello	
Iago.....	Light
Lear	
Wolsey.....	Light
Richard 2d	
Richard 3rd	
Benedick	
Bertuccio in The Fool's Revenge	
Pescara in The Apostate (Light)	
Brutus	} Julius Cæsar (All light)
Cassius	
Antony	
Brutus (Fall of Tarquin)	
Richelieu	
Claude Melnotte.....	Light
Stranger & Petruchio (double bill)....	Light
Don Cesar.....	Light
Sir Giles Overreach	
Sir Edward Mortimer	

Several of these would give us trouble on your stage on account of 'armies' & 'fiddlers' — perhaps it would be better to omit

Richd 3d & Macbeth. Richard in the original would be a novelty, however; so I intend to do it — unless you prefer Colley Cibber.

An early reply with full particulars will greatly oblige

Yours truly

Edwin Booth."

On June 4 Mr. Daly replied, deciding to give Mr. Booth one-half the gross receipts of every performance up to \$1500 and two-thirds of all above \$1500; and suggesting the following programme:

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| 1st week | Hamlet 5 nights & matinée.<br>Merchant of Venice Saturday night.  |
| 2d week  | Richelieu 5 nights & matinée.<br>Stranger &c. Saturday night.     |
| 3rd week | Othello 5 nights & matinée.<br>Iago Saturday night.               |
| 4th week | King Lear 5 nights & matinée.<br>Apostate Saturday night.         |
| 5th week | Richard II 5 nights & matinée.<br>Claude Melnotte Saturday night. |
| 6th week | Macbeth 4 times.<br>Brutus 2 times.                               |

"Cedar Cliff, Cos Cob, Conn., Sept. 6th, 1875.

Augustin Daly Esqr.

Dear Sir,

I send herewith the prompt books of the plays selected for my engagement. The bearer, (Henry Fisher) is thoroughly familiar with all the sets, scenes, &c. &c. & can render great assistance to your stage manager should such service be required.

I would prefer to confer with you before the 'casts' are decided upon definitely — for there are several parts which *appear* to be of little consequence but which are indeed very important; such as the *Fool* in *Lear*, *Wilford* in *Iron Chest*,

*François* in Richelieu, are rendered ridiculous when performed by women, & I particularly desire them to be given to young men. The *Fool* should be a man who has both humor & pathos & be able to sing; otherwise the part is better omitted. I am told they have at the Walnut St. just the man for such a part. I do not know his name; last season there was a Mr. Howard there who *looked* and I am sure can act the character with effect.

I am still too feeble to use a pen & scrawl as best I can with a pencil. My recovery has been very rapid, & daily I gain more strength. I am however barely able to totter about without assistance. Next Monday will decide whether or no I shall be able to be 'on time.' I think there is no doubt of it, for when I begin to recuperate I do it in dead earnest. All pain is gone, and my principal difficulty lies in the stomach, where I received the blow which gave such a terrible shock to my system.

Hoping your new play may be so successful that should I unfortunately be unable to begin at the appointed time it will carry you safely over the 'gap,'

I am truly yours  
Edwin Booth."

"Cedar Cliff, Cos Cob, Conn., Sept. 15th, 1875.

My dear Mr. Daly,

I hoped ere this to tell you there would be no doubt of my ability to begin my engagement at the appointed date, but tho' my recovery — up to a certain point — was rapid it now progresses very slowly; I am yet unable to endure any exertion beyond a gentle walk about the garden, nor can I rise from my bed without assistance. My broken arm is so stiff that I cannot move it, and every attempt I make to inflate my lungs causes great pain.

I fear I would break down after the first night if not during the first performance unless the opening is deferred for at least two weeks.

My surgeon, who till today has been more sanguine than myself, now thinks as I do and will write you on the subject.

It will be far better to lose the two weeks than by any failure of mine to ruin the whole engagement, and I sincerely hope — serious as the loss will be to me — that you will be secured by the successful run of your new play.

Concerning the casts you have sent me I hardly know what to say. I remember Mr. Hardenbergh more as a personator of comic than serious characters, and Brougham in sentiment seems queer. For the rest I know only Fisher, Harkins, Ringgold, Parkes & Davidge.

I wish I had — at our first interview — mentioned several actors who, I am sure, would give great strength to the cast of Shakesperian plays; I intended to do so, but as time slipped by so swiftly the subject dropped out of my memory.

The only changes I can now suggest are — 1st, *Florinda*; 2nd, *Joseph*. The former requires more power than *Lady Macbeth*, and I fear Miss Jewett is not strong enough to endure so great a strain; the 3rd & 4th acts demand as much strength as the 4th act of *Richelieu*, indeed the whole weight of the play is on her shoulders; *Pescara* is but a mere 'filler-in' compared with *Florinda* and *Hemeya*. I should say that Miss Lewis would be more suitable for this part, & Miss Jewett (if she sings) for *Ophelia*.

For *Joseph* Mr. Fisher would be nearer the mark than Mr. Davidge — if Fisher will give a surly bluntness, a sort of 'ragged edge' to the character; funny Josephs mar all the delicate touches, and some of the strongest points of *Richelieu*.

*Gomez* (in the Apostate) is a very important & strongly marked character; & if Mr. Hamilton (whom I do not know) is capable of performing it he can surely do *Huguet* well; I see that part is left blank.

If I knew your people I might select one for *François*; Ringgold once looked the character, but I have not seen him for some years; he certainly can act it well — if he is not too fat. *Orleans* is of less importance — your *Rosencrantz* or *Guildestern* can carry that.

This is all I can suggest at present — of course if I were better acquainted with your company I might do better.

For the *Fool* I am at a stand; a man like Pateman or Becket would just fit the part; Walcot told me he had engaged such a comedian for the Walnut in Howard's place, who might be borrowed for a few nights.

Be assured that nothing less than positive inability to render justice to you, the public and myself could induce me to postpone my New York engagement for a day, but alas! tho' the spirit be willing the flesh is weak, and I must submit.

Very truly yours  
Edwin Booth."

With regard to the distribution of the parts about which Mr. Booth was solicitous, they were all filled to his satisfaction, though the *Fool* in "Lear" was given to a woman, Miss Cowell; but *François* in "Richelieu" was given to the youthful John Drew, *Florinda* in "The Apostate" was intrusted to Miss Jeffreys Lewis, and Hardenbergh gave to *Joseph* in "Richelieu" all the ruggedness and crustiness required for due effect. Fisher's *père noble* style would have been wholly out of keeping with the part.

On October 25, 1875, the foremost actor of the American stage stood, pale and collected, clad in the mourning garb of *Hamlet*, to receive an extraordinary greeting from a crowded house. He inclined his head at the renewed expressions of sincere affection which were almost involuntarily repeated when the first musical accents fell from his lips. This greeting was not only extended to the favorite who had recovered from a dangerous accident, but was the first the public had been able to give him since the financial misfortune which lost him his splendid theatre. It was a doubly sympathetic and loving greeting.

The season had to be reduced from six weeks to four by reason of Booth's health. In those four weeks Mr. Daly produced ten plays for him: "Hamlet," "Othello," "Richard II," "The Merchant of Venice," "King Lear," "The Taming of the Shrew," "The Apostate," "The Stranger," "Richelieu," and "The Lady of Lyons." In three performances of "Othello" Booth played *Iago* to Harkins' *Moor*. Miss Davenport returned from her star engagement to appear at two matinées, playing *Pauline* to Booth's *Claude* at one, and *Mrs. Haller* and *Katherine* to his *Stranger* and *Petruchio* at the other. The young John Drew's share in these performances was *Guildestern*, *François*, *Ludovico*, *Sir Pierce of Exton*, and *The King of France*. The principal ladies who supported Booth throughout were Miss Jeffreys Lewis, Miss Emily Rigl, Miss Sydney Cowell, Miss Alice Grey, and Mrs. G. H. Gilbert, and the gentlemen were Harkins, Fisher, Barrymore, Davidge, and Hardenbergh.

One of the novel features of the engagement was the revival of "Richard II," for the first time in about half a century in New York; the full cast of the piece is therefore of interest: *Richard II*, Edwin Booth; *Duke of York and Duke of Lancaster*, uncles to the King, Frank Hardenbergh and Charles Fisher; *Henry Bolingbroke*, D. H. Harkins; *Duke of Aumerle*, M. Barrymore; *Duke of Norfolk*, B. T. Ringgold; *Earl of Surrey*, Mr. Buxton; *Earl of Salisbury*, George Parkes; *Earl of Berkely*, Mr. Johnson; *Lord Fitzwater*, Mr. Evans; *Bishop of Carlisle*, Mr. Benson; *Abbot of Westminster*, Mr. Hamilton; *Lord Marshall*, Mr. Chamberlain; *Earl of Northumberland*, Mr. Forrest; *Sir Pierce of Exton*, John Drew; *Lord Ross*, Mr. Nichols; *Lord Willoughby*, Mr. Emden; *Busby*, Mr. Allen; *Bagot*, Mr. Kane; *Green*, Mr. Illion; *Groom*, John Moore; *Keeper*, Mr. De Veau; *The Queen*,

Miss Emily Rigl; *Duchess of Gloster*, Mrs. G. H. Gilbert; *Duchess of York*, Miss Alice Grey; *ladies attending on the Queen*, Misses Bowne and Wood.

The initial performance of "Richard II" was on November 12, 1875. Booth prepared the acting version. The four performances which were given satisfied the interest or curiosity of students of the drama and did not attract all the admirers of Booth.

It will be interesting to know the pecuniary results of this, one of the most important of Booth's engagements in New York: *Hamlet* was played nine times to an average of \$1855; *Iago* three times to an average of \$1696; *Richelieu* five times to an average of \$1675; *Shylock* once to \$1503; *Othello* once to \$1446; *King Lear* three times to an average of \$1436; *Pescara* twice to an average of \$1125; and *Richard II* four times to an average of \$731. The largest receipts of the engagement were at the two matinées in which Miss Davenport played with Mr. Booth — "The Lady of Lyons" drew \$2176 and "The Stranger" and "Katherine and Petruccio," \$2152. The gross receipts of all the performances, thirty in number, were \$47,909, or an average of \$1597. The prices were at the old rate of a dollar and a half for orchestra seats.

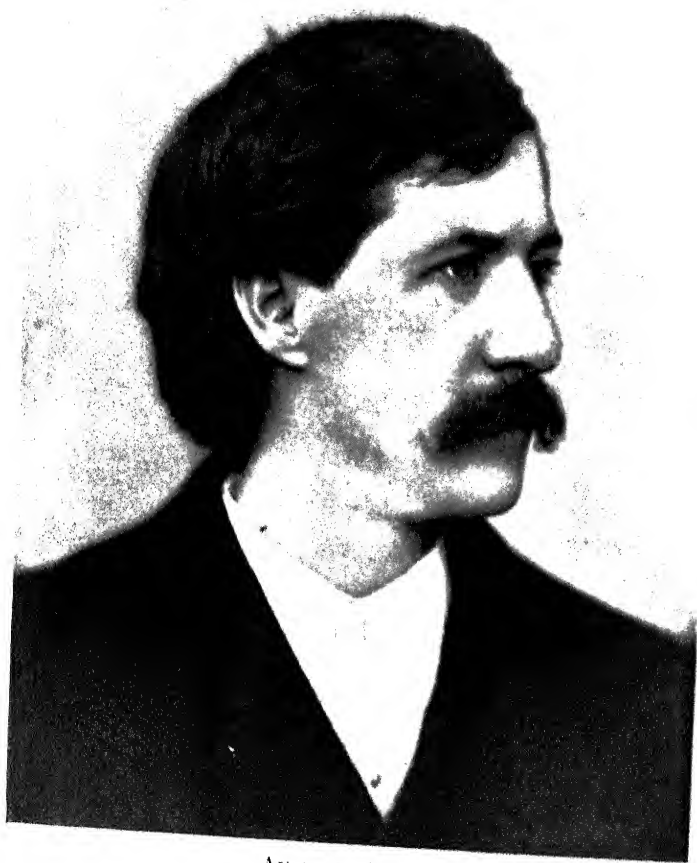
Mr. Daly was most lavish in the scenic mounting and costuming of the ten plays, for which complete tableaux had to be painted, wardrobes provided, and mechanical devices installed. These ate up all Daly's profits. His observation upon Booth's choice of plays was: "The cry is still for 'Hamlet,' yet Booth persists in varying his performances"; but afterwards, of "King Lear," he said: "One of Mr. Booth's most decided and immediate successes; enthusiasm unbounded." "The Apostate," he records, was "not suited to new-fashioned audiences.

and coldly received." He praises Harkins in *Othello* and *Edgar*, but says his *Iago* was "bad." Booth's frequent variations of programme are ascribed to Mrs. Booth's advice. The manager notes with regard to "The Merchant of Venice," "The hurried performances do no credit to the theatre."

Immediately after Mr. Booth's departure, Miss Clara Morris returned to Daly's stage. The play selected for her appearance was "Leah the Forsaken," but the lawyers representing Miss Kate Bateman objected that the use of that title infringed Miss Bateman's rights. To avoid the delay of more legal disputation, which seemed to hang upon the manager this season like the Cossacks upon the flanks of Napoleon's army in the Russian campaign, Mosenthal's powerful drama was called "The New Leah"; and the curtain rose upon the familiar scenes on the evening of November 22, 1875. Miss Morris began her season in apparently excellent health and fine form, and with every ambition to renew her great successes, but it was evident, from the size of the audience which greeted her and the small numbers that attended the subsequent presentations of the play, that the famous part of Miss Bateman was not, in Miss Morris' repertoire, to be an attraction. The opening night was respectable only — \$1096 — and the second night but \$453. The third rose to \$712. The fourth night happened to be Thanksgiving, and the holiday evening brought \$1975, but the fifth night fell again to \$491 and the Saturday matinée was \$630. On Saturday night Miss Morris was unable to appear (as also at the Thanksgiving matinée); and as she did not care to resume her part of *Anne Sylvester* in a revival of "Man and Wife," she terminated her engagement after the first week of "The New Leah," which she humorously described as "a brilliant failure."







AUGUSTIN DALY

The lack of public interest was a complete surprise in and out of the theatre. Daly was at work upon a new original play, but the abrupt closing of Miss Morris' season again left his stage unprovided for. The genial "Our Boys" had to be hurriedly put on again to keep the theatre open, but Miss Davenport was out of the cast (filling a star engagement), and for a fortnight Mr. Daly did what he recorded as the worst business in his management.

When receipts of theatrical entertainments fall, it is wonderful to observe the workings of a law which, as managers of theatres can affirm, has been as clearly established as any discovered by Newton or Kepler. Successes, of course, "play to the capacity of the house"; but why, when bad business sets in and the week opens to, say, four hundred odd, that figure should be maintained every day until the close of the week, as if the playgoers had some understanding to go each night in certain numbers; and why their mind-waves should communicate the intelligence that the next week is to begin, say, at three hundred and keep that up, is a psychological problem which yet awaits solution.

The new original play was "Pique," and until its production this Fifth Avenue season had required a sort of prestidigitatorial art to keep it going; but with "Pique" all was changed. After the impression made by the first night<sup>1</sup> — which kept the audience willingly together until after midnight — the theatre and the play settled down to a run of 238 performances.

One incident in the drama was suggested by a passage in Miss Florence Marryatt's novel "Her Lord and Master." More than one playwright took advantage of the disclosure of this fact to profit by the success of "Pique"

and put "something just as good" upon the market. There was a play which the composer actually copyrighted under the title of "Piqued." Another person, a journalist, invented a tale calculated to injure the theatre and the manager. The story was that a poor authoress had left a play at Daly's and had heard nothing more of it until she recognized its incidents in "Pique"; and the fiction was eagerly seized upon and published in a weekly dramatic paper. A libel suit followed, and the jury rendered a verdict of over \$2500 in favor of Mr. Daly.

The subsequent history of this verdict may be set down here. The defendant was unable to pay the judgment, which hung over him for some years, during which he continued to show his ill will. At last, when he was in sore straits in a litigation with others, his adversaries sought Mr. Daly and endeavored to purchase the judgment and use it to club their enemy. To their proposition Mr. Daly simply returned a refusal. He had vindicated his reputation and was not looking for revenge. This so changed the feeling of his old foe that he published a complete retraction, repeated more than once, and was always afterwards Mr. Daly's firm supporter.

As the damage inflicted by a libel is to the reputation of the plaintiff, it is always open to the defendant to show that his adversary's character is so bad that it cannot be affected by anything that is said about him. This was attempted in the case in question, and two witnesses were found who, being called to the stand, kissed the Book and said that *they* were acquainted with Mr. Daly's reputation and that it was bad. One of these persons Mr. Daly had never heard of, and the other was the author of "Piqued." Our old friend Chief Justice Charles P. Daly happened to be holding Court at that time, and went over to the Superior Court where the libel

suit was tried, to support the character of the plaintiff. The defendant's counsel rose to cross-examine the venerable Chief Justice in order to show that, while he might be a very good judge of the character of members of the Bar, he was hardly an authority upon theatrical matters; but the first query, "I suppose, Judge Daly, you are not much acquainted with the stage and people connected with it?" met with the unexpected response, "On the contrary, I am very well acquainted with them"; and it speedily developed that the Chief Justice as an authority upon things theatrical was hardly surpassed by any dramatic historian of his time.

The ubiquitous George the Count Joannes was a spectator of the trial. He had no disinclination to figure in any important litigation of the period, either as witness, counsel, or bystander, and he inscribed the following epistle upon a sheet of legal cap:

"City of New York, April 14th/75.

No. 23 Chambers St. Room A.

To Augustin Daly Esq. Plaintiff.

I. My Dear Sir, I am happy to be of any service to you, in the above pending action. I repeat, as a matter of Law, in this suit, — that you have not to prove a *negative*; but Deft. has to prove the *affirmative*, — *that you did*, &c.

II. The Deft. yesterday introduced, as a witness, a Mr. Hallam — to testify to *that affirmative*, but he could not *name* any person who told him so. In rebuttal, — the *Chief Justice* was your witness, — as to yr good & honest character: — but, as I understood, he could not name *persons*: — but from general repute. — The ruling of the presiding Judge was agt. Mr. Hallam; & for the same reason, — may reach the other side.

III. If you subpoena *me* (& it is not too late) I can testify upon that very question: & *name persons* who told me as to your honesty, viz my own Daughter, the Countess Avonia; the late Judge Dowling, & the late Edwin Forrest Esqr.

1. — Lady Avonia from her business relations with you.  
 2. — Judge Dowling, — from general repute,  
 3. — Edwin Forrest Esq. — was very positive; & in certain advice to me professionally, viz: He advised me to make a dramatic tour, & 'farewell' — through the United States, (I have never been West &c) upon my leaving the States; — & suggested the manner to carry it through; and, that in 18 months, or two years, — that I would make a profit of \$100,000 — & that he would guarantee it, — '*provided I had a skillful & honest manager.*' I named a person whom I knew to be skillful, but no further, — Mr. Forrest in his peculiar & brusque manner said 'Bah! he is a chronic liar & a chronic thief!' Mr. Forrest after a pause, — as if reflecting, suddenly said, 'I will name the man for that dramatic enterprise; — & he is *Mr. Augustin Daly*, — gentlemanly; had dramatic knowledge; & is an honest man, — & one, in every respect, you will sympathize with.'

Now, this evidence is absolute; & not lessened by my speaking it; & will crush down a dozen '*Hallams*' — even of the *historian's* family.

IV. I should be subpoenaed — to meet a question in that respect, — from Defendant's Counsel, though I have a citizen's right; and as *Amicus Curiae*; — & as Counsellor at Law, a duty to promote, — *in open Court*, — *public Justice*.

Of course, you will submit this to your Counsel in this case; — with the legal compliments of his *brother* 'in law,' —

Yours truly. &c

George, The Count Joannes  
 Of the New York Supreme Court &c."

It is hardly necessary to say that Mr. Olin, plaintiff's counsel, did not consider it necessary to call the Count as a witness.

Among visitors to performances of "Pique" were General Prado, President-elect of Peru; Benson J. Lossing; Charles O'Connor; Don Pedro, Emperor of

Brazil; J. G. Fair, the Bonanza King, with whom Mr. Daly renewed his California acquaintance and whom he entertained in the green room after the performance; and lastly a certain well-known member of the detective force, who brought with him the supposed widow of the burglar who had kidnapped Charlie Ross, in the hope, as he said, that she might be so moved "sitting at the play" as to disclose the whereabouts of that infant.

In "Pique" it may be said that Miss Fanny Davenport began her career as a star. It was the first time after six years with Mr. Daly's company that she had a wholly leading part. She had been subordinated to Miss Ethel, Miss Morris, and Miss Dyas in turn. Her opportunity had come at last, and the estimate of her work by the press was so unanimously flattering and sincere that the young girl enjoyed her triumph to the full. It must have amused her, too, to have to report to her manager that Mr. Wallack invited her to call and have a chat with an eye to the next season; and it must have puzzled Wallack that such a brevet of distinction was not appreciated. A diverting incident due to her nervousness in the first performances of "Pique" adds to the traditions of the stage one more instance of laughable transpositions of text, like *Beauséant's* famous "It will be all over Sunset before Lyons"! *Mabel*, haughtily addressing her husband *Captain Standish*, and demanding a candle to light her to bed, uttered with great force the remarkable line: "If I must go alone, Captain Candle, give me a standish"! She was hardly able to finish the scene.

Some changes took place during the season. Little Miss Heron and grown-up Miss Jewett left the company, and next year were found at the Union Square. Mr. Daly once thought of bringing Offenbach to America. This was now effected by Grau, who hired Gilmore's

Garden (now the Madison Square) for monster concerts *à la Jullien*. Offenbach was to receive \$500 per night. He opened there on May 12, 1876, and closed on the 22d. He was next taken to Booth's for a week to play in conjunction with Aimée. On July 7 he made his last appearance in America. An old landmark, Castle Garden, was destroyed by fire on July 12. In the middle of the nineteenth century it was the favorite opera-house of New York, but since 1855 had been used as the emigrant dépôt. It should have been preserved permanently for summer entertainments, as it was the only institution of the kind, so located, in the world.

The earliest attempt of Augustin at public management has been duly set forth in these pages, and is recalled by an entry in his office-book opposite the date of April 6, 1876, as follows :

"Twenty years ago this day, A. D. 'perpetrated' his first scheme of management. Hired the old Brooklyn Museum and introduced the 'celebrated Melville Troupe of Juvenile comedians' to the public. 'Toodles,' 'Macbeth' (2d act), 'Pill-coddy.' A. D., J. F. D., Will Sefton, Fred. Massey the stars. Expenses \$76.00. Receipts \$11.25."

\* \* \* \* \*

Miss Jeffreys Lewis having been sent on tour with "Pique," Miss Georgiana Drew, John's young sister, took her place on April 17, 1876, in the sympathetic part of *Mary Standish*. She also played *Clara Douglas* to Harkins' *Alfred Evelyn* at his benefit. These were the days of benefits. John Brougham selected "The Serious Family" for his, and revelled in his old part of *Captain Murphy Maguire*. Miss Davenport was the fascinating widow *Mrs. Delmaine*, Davidge *Sleek*, Barrymore *Torrens*, Miss Drew *Mrs. Torrens*, and Mrs. Gilbert *Lady Sowerby Creamly*. It was a delicious performance; but that was



not all, for glorious John also gave as afterpiece his own "Pocahontas," wielding the tomahawk of *Powhatan*, with Miss Sydney Cowell as *Pocahontas*, George Vining Bowers as *Smith*, Hardenbergh *Rolfe*, and Mrs. Gilbert *Wee-cha-ven-da*, with one of her inimitable *pas seuls*. This entertainment was repeated for Davidge's benefit on May 27.

At her benefit Miss Davenport played *Rosalind*, Lawrence Barrett volunteering as *Orlando*, F. L. Davenport as *Jaques*, and the tenor William Castle as *Amiens*. For Lewis' benefit, "Charity" was revived with Miss Davenport as *Ruth Tredgett*, and Lewis as *Fitzpartington*. For Mr. Fiske's benefit Miss Davenport played *Gilberte* in "Frou-Frou" for the first time in New York, and afterwards *Jenny Leatherlungs* in the wild farce "Jenny Lind at Last," one of Mrs. Matilda Wood's favorite parts. The entertainment concluded with Brougham and Davidge in "The Siamese Twins."

The last benefit of the season was the "author's festival" on June 23. Two of his great successes were given — "Divorce" at a matinée and "Pique" in the evening. Each had achieved its two hundredth performance. The theatre was illuminated, and a facsimile in silver of the regular reserved seat ticket was presented to each lady of the audience. It will not surprise anybody to learn that Mr. Daly took a hand in the illumination himself, with the result told in a letter to me:

"July 12th.

Dear Brother,

For the first day in nine I am able to write anything beyond signing a check. I got a sprinkling of melted resin from a torch on the night of the illumination and the joints of my right hand have been in a flaming state ever since. A vigorous application of linseed oil, lime water, carbolic salve, &c., how-

ever kept the fever down and I am better now. . . . 'This morning I am happy and free but in a healthy 'blistered' state."

In February, 1876, during the run of "Pique," the memorable revival meetings of Moody and Sankey began at the Hippodrome and lasted many weeks with immense attendance, which affected the business of many theatres.

Now and then I am reminded of my brother's care for old actors, and I find that at this period he gave a place as doorkeeper to a venerable relic of bygone days—Herr Cline, the tight-rope dancer.

In the busiest part of the season I got my brother to sit for his portrait. It was painted by Thomas Jansen, a Norwegian artist, who was on a visit to America and had some well-known New Yorkers for sitters. It was difficult to keep Augustin in repose long enough to satisfy the painter. Every hour of his day was taken up by interviews with applicants for engagements, travelling managers, etc., and a mass of details most managers leave to subordinates. No aspirant for a place in his company was too humble to be personally received.

I find an almost spectral reminder at this time of old Bowery days. Edward Eddy, once the favorite of pit and gallery, now a rover in the tropics, and long a stranger to New York, wrote:

"623 Broadway, N. Y. Oct 29th, '75.

A. Daly Esqr.:

Can I make an arrangement with you to act 'Divorce' in a few of the Eastern cities, not Boston of course. I will place it upon the stage in a superior manner with first class company, &c.

I desire to give the 'Two Orphans' a shake, as I am assured that your play can be played to as much or more money.

An early answer will oblige

Yours truly

Ed. Eddy.

P.S. I also desire to play 'Divorce' in the West Indies where I visit this fall.

E. E."

Poor Eddy went to the West Indies and died in Kingston, Jamaica, less than two months after writing that letter. Shortly after his death his widow, Henrietta Irving, wrote to my brother that she was left quite helpless, and asked for an engagement.

The deaths of several celebrities occurred this season: Charlotte Cushman (February 18, 1876), A. T. Stewart (April 10), Barney Williams (April 25), and George Sand (June 18). Mr. Daly considered Miss Cushman "much overrated," and Barney Williams as "the best of the old school stage Irishmen. He began the battle of life unaided and fought it well. He rose above his birth-rank, and preserved his new station honorably"; but, speaking of his funeral, he inveighs against "a sinful profusion of flowers. This flower-show at funerals is becoming scandalous."

Shook & Palmer were able to maintain in New York an injunction against the performance of "Rose Michel," and it may be interesting to know that when Mr. Daly tried to enjoin a piracy of "The Big Bonanza" in Massachusetts, he was met by a conflict of laws described in a letter from his counsel, Mr. Rives:

"The Yankees I fear will be too much for you. In the case of 'Our American Cousin' the Massachusetts Courts refused to interfere to protect Laura Keene. The New York & Massachusetts Court hold directly opposite views on the question."

While on the subject of law and lawyers, this chronicle must include a singular event in the theatrical world. The manager of the Park Theatre had been for several weeks mysteriously hinting at a coming surprise which would prove unexampled in stage history. This turned out to be so; it was announced that Mr. A. Oakey Hall had resolved to embrace a theatrical career, had written a play called "The Crucible," and would enact the hero, *Wilmot Kierton*, a man wrongfully accused of crime, convicted, sentenced, and imprisoned, but ultimately proved to be innocent.

It did create a sensation, but a painful one, to witness the ex-mayor and ex-district attorney, once a leader of the Bar, who had so triumphantly passed through the ordeal of a public trial, condemn himself to prison garb on the mimic stage. The step was not excused by the display of any special gift for acting. He had a musical voice, but his gestures were those of an orator, not of an actor. No sentiment but curiosity could induce a visit to his performances. Those who felt the greatest interest in him would be likely to stay away. But it should be recorded that his ill-success did not affect the light-hearted hero of the event in the least. After his experiment had lasted three weeks he closed the theatre, and published a card announcing his return to the practice of the law after "a vacation." For years he continued to be — with now and then some exhibition of new eccentricity — a versatile writer for the press, filling journalistic posts with undiminished sagacity and industry.

At the outset of the season the bills of Daly's Theatre had announced the approaching début of Miss Anna Dickinson. She was to appear on February 7, 1876, but the success of "Pique" necessitated a postponement; and

no new date having been agreed upon, Miss Dickinson never appeared under Mr. Daly's management. Her début took place at the Eagle Theatre (afterwards the Standard), which stood on Sixth Avenue opposite Greeley Square, as *Anne Boleyn* in "A Crown of Thorns." Her reception by the press was not encouraging, and the season terminated abruptly. Her next appearance in New York (which was after a long retirement caused by illness) was in 1882 at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, then managed by Haverly, when she attempted the part of *Hamlet*. This eccentric performance was withdrawn after a week and her old play "A Crown of Thorns" replaced it. This was her last appearance in New York. It is said she made a fortune as a lecturer, but it must have been lessened materially by her dramatic attempts. It is not probable that she was sufficiently docile to be willing at any period to submit to the guidance and training necessary to a stage career.

The manager's promises of new plays for this season included a comedy by Bret Harte:

"45 Fifth Avenue, Friday A.M.

My dear Mr Daly

Thank you for the suggestion. I owe Mrs. Harte a promise to take her to see *Hamlet*, and have accepted your kind invitation for Saturday, for her.

Then we can sit in the back of the box, between the acts, and discuss the *other* play — wh. Shakespeare ought to have written but wh. as he did not, I may possibly undertake; or, I can slip out and talk with you in your office.

Let me know if this is satisfactory.

Very truly yours  
Bret Harte."

The Daly programmes also announced a drama "by a distinguished member of the judiciary." This was the

late Justice Barrett, whose attempt at dramatic writing (in collaboration, it should be understood, with his talented wife, Gertrude Fairfield, daughter of Sumner Lincoln Fairfield, poet and littérateur), deserves more than a passing notice. In his early days, even while on the Bench, Barrett had been fond of private theatricals, and had appeared as an amateur actor on public occasions. The drama we speak of was written in 1875, and called "Restored to Society," a title changed afterwards to "The Watchword." Upon reading the manuscript, the manager found that after sympathy for the unhappy hero and heroine had been fully aroused, they were left by the dénouement more miserable than ever. He suggested to the Judge that the fate of a play with its audience depended upon a reasonably happy solution of its problems — to which the Judge replied that his object had been to dismiss the audience not in a happy, but in a thoughtful mood, and that upon consultation with his wife they had agreed to stand or fall with the play as it was. It was then submitted by the authors to Wallack, and accepted, but was not produced until after seven years, under another title, — "An American Wife." This was on December 18, 1883. It ran for two weeks.

## CHAPTER XVI

E. A. Sothern at Daly's. "Dundreary" and "Garrick" open the eighth season, 1876-1877. Sothern's care for details. Linda Dietz reëngaged. Arrival of Charles Coghlan to be new leading man. His début as *Alfred Evelyn*. Miss Davenport on tour. "Life" produced for the Centennial crowds. Amy Fawsitt. Brief appearance. Death. Return of Miss Davenport. "As You Like It." "The School for Scandal." The Brooklyn Theatre fire. Blow to theatrical business. "The American" produced. "Lemons," a merry success. Mrs. Gilbert's great part. Coghlan's benefit. His *Hamlet* breaks down. Harkins gives up the Ghost in this revival. Discharged. His previous dissatisfaction and reprisals. "Blue Glass" not a success. "The Princess Royal." Bronson Howard's misery with melodrama. Engagement of Adelaide Neilson. Several benefits. Last work of the season, "Vesta," from Parodi's "Rome Vaincue." Miss Davenport's *Posthumia*. End of the manager's hardest year up to this time.

SOME appreciable instant of time is "supposed to elapse" between theatrical seasons as well as between sessions of Congress, but the eighth season of the Daly management began on the next working day after the close of the seventh. It served to reintroduce E. A. Sothern, after a long absence from America. He opened in *Lord Dundreary* and what was left of Tom Taylor's "Our American Cousin," after room had been made in it for his lordship's increased proportions. Sothern came as a star, to be supported, as Booth had been, by a company engaged by Daly. Miss Linda Dietz, once an ingénue in the old Fifth Avenue days, was reëngaged to assist

he could advise "protecting the house" — i.e. papering, or crowding with invited guests so as to present an appearance of prosperity; and he must be announced as plain "Sothern":

"I wd. suggest your protecting the house for the 1st 2 or 3 nights — so as to open well — but all this I leave to you. Have you enough wood-cuts? Drop me a line to Continental, Phil.

Yrs. always  
Sothern.

Mind I'm announced as  
*Sothern*  
not E. A. Sothern."

And he occasionally wrote his own advertisements, and particulars for small bills. *Dundreary* ran nearly a month, and *David Garrick* filled out the rest of his six weeks' engagement.

"Dear Daly,

I see you announce 'Garrick' for 28th, so if there's reasonably good booking we shall have to produce it. Under these circumstances don't you think you'd better put a special notice in ads. saying something to this effect —

*Last 6 nights of Dundreary*

in consequence of the universally expressed desire for Mr. Sothern's appearance in his original characters in *Garrick & Home*. Garrick Mon. 28 August. Home Mon. 4 Sept. We can easily put *Dundreary* back on the bill the last week if we find *Home* doesn't draw extra well."

There was no need to produce "Home," and it was not given.

He and my brother fraternized enthusiastically, and his time with Daly was passed so pleasantly that the



star proposed another engagement for the following season :

" . . . I expect a telegram every day from Australia. If I don't go there wd. it suit you to let me open on Monday, April 2d, 1877, in a new play, the very best I've ever had written — we wd. run the piece thro' the summer — if business warranted it . . . only 8 parts in the piece & all admirable. 3 acts, & very easily put on the stage.

Possibly you may 'simply ignore' the idea !

Yrs. always

E. A. Sothern

I never spent a jollier day than yesterday — in spite of that screwed-up sailor !"

Sothern, like Jefferson, was forced by public insistence to spend most of his time on a single rôle, although there were almost infinite possibilities in his art — as the transition from the vapid *Dundreary* to the gifted and polished *Garrick* abundantly testified.

To strengthen the company where it had sometimes been found weak, that is, with regard to a masculine actor who possessed the authority of Wallack, the charm of Montague or Rignold, or the force of Thorne, Daly brought over one of the latest favorites of London, Charles Coghlan. He was the superior of all those named, in youthful appearance, manners, and taste, and was presented on September 12, 1876, as *Alfred Evelyn* in Bulwer's "Money."

Miss Mary Wells was engaged this season for certain lines of robust "old women" and eccentric rôles, an instance of the manager's attention to the nicest shading of his dramatic pictures. His company consisted not only of those named, but of the entire forces supporting Miss Davenport, now travelling with "Pique."

The success of Coghlan was immediate, and "Money" was kept on until September 27, when "Life" was brought out with éclat. This was an adaptation of the French farce "Le Procès Veauradieux." Coghlan and James Lewis had the chief parts; Mdlle. Sohlke led a resplendent ballet in the spectacle; and the chief female character was intrusted to Miss Amy Fawsitt, who had played *Lady Teazle* four hundred nights and *Lady Gay Spanker* two hundred nights in London. Her unexpected and complete physical collapse almost immediately compelled her to withdraw from the play and to resign from the company. Mr. Daly advised her immediate return to England, and placed the money for her passage in her hands. She continued to remain in the city, however, until her death, which occurred in the following December. When she gave up her part in "Life," it was assumed by Miss Drew.

Sothorn just now wrote one of his characteristic letters to Daly:

"I learn yr. new piece is a 'great go' — so it's quite on the cards you can do as well without me — & possibly better. I *must* answer London's engagement offers at once. I prefer staying in America at present & I prefer playing with you. If you *don't* want me that ends the argument — & if you *do* want me what terms do you propose? I will produce 3 new pieces if required. House Monday \$1974, Tuesday \$2008. The biggest Bus. ever known in Phil.

Yrs.  
S.

I only get clear halves here — but I'm so d—d good natured that I don't growl. What an easy-tempered ass I am."

"Life" was played to crowds for nearly two months, when it was withdrawn to put on "As You Like It" with Miss Davenport as *Rosalind* (her first appearance

this season) supported, by Coghlan as *Orlando*. Her *Rosalind* showed a sportive and assertive rather than an arch and mischievous spirit. Coghlan was a romantic *Orlando*.

One of Coghlan's great hits in London was *Charles Surface*, a miracle of elegance, dress, and distinction; and a most elaborate revival of "The School for Scandal," long in preparation, with Harkins as *Joseph*, Lewis as *Sir Benjamin*, Davidge as *Moses*, Hardenbergh as *Crabtree*, Fisher as *Sir Peter*, Brougham as *Oliver*, William Castle as *Bumper*, Miss Drew as *Maria*, Mrs. Gilbert as *Mrs. Candour*, Miss Wells as *Lady Sneerwell*, Coghlan as *Charles*, and Miss Davenport as *Lady Teazle*, was presented to a brilliant audience on December 4, 1876.

As the audience emerged from the first representation, it heard the newsboys crying extras with news of the burning of the Brooklyn Theatre; but not until the next day was the extent of that awful catastrophe known. This theatre had been hired by Shook & Palmer of the Union Square as an outlet for the numerous attractions they were continually acquiring, and had been opened with a revival of "Frou-Frou" and the momentary return to the stage of Miss Agnes Ethel. On the night of the fire, the theatre was occupied by "The Two Orphans" company, of which Miss Kate Claxton as the blind *Louise* was the leading attraction. She escaped from the burning building through the parquette with the aid of the audience. It was singular that the experience of her grandfather in a similar disaster, the burning of the Richmond Theatre in Virginia, had turned him from the stage to the pulpit. The Brooklyn fire, like most fires in theatres while a performance is in progress, began on the stage, which was lighted by gas. All the persons behind the scenes escaped, and so did the occu-

pants of the lower part of the house; but the exit from the upper circle was blocked at the first turning of the stairs by the crowding and falling of human beings, and the mass of people in that tier were absolutely imprisoned. When the police saw no one coming down the stairs they assumed that the house was empty, and closed the doors without ascending to make sure that no one was left behind. The result was the loss of over three hundred lives.

This calamity practically ruined the business of all the theatres in the country for that season. The houses fell off at least one-half. The patrons who braved the perils now supposed to lurk in every playhouse were reminded of their danger by reading in the programmes how they might escape in case of alarm; and for many months there was an active demand at the box office, not for seats near the stage but near the street. Notwithstanding the gorgeous performance of Sheridan's immortal work, what had been up to that time a brilliant season at the Fifth Avenue was suddenly extinguished.

Daly had a strong drama in Dumas' "*L'Etrangère*," which contained a great part for Coghlan. Adapted by Mr. Daly and called "*The American*," it was produced on December 20, 1876. In spite of capital playing Coghlan as the *Duke* displaying all the high polish as well as the "reserve power" for which he had been credited repeatedly abroad, the Dumas play won no sympathy from American audiences. The next play, "*Lemons*," was one of those bright things from the German, which Daly and Daly's company could deal with to perfection. It was produced on January 15, 1877, with all the company and particularly Mrs. Gilbert in the cast. I say particularly, because she had the burden

of the play as a match-making, managing, and dominating "feminist," and carried it off brilliantly. "Lemons" filled the house for eight weeks.

Coghlan had (according to stipulation) a benefit, on which occasion he essayed *Hamlet*. It was, curiously enough, apparent that he had no strength to carry the part through. He absolutely "went to pieces" before the close of the third act. His culmination was practically reached in the second act, after the impassioned soliloquy: "Oh what a rogue and peasant slave am I!" Coghlan rushed up to the throne and fell to stabbing the empty chair, as if to glut his vengeance in this shadowy fashion. The excess of this business seemed to exhaust him, and the remainder of the play was accomplished with indubitable signs of weariness. At his request he had been excused from playing at the matinée, so as to husband his strength:

My dear Daly

"365 Lex Ave, Sunday, March 4.

On reflection I think it would be the height of absurdity for me to attempt to play *Hamlet* twice in one day after a run of lighter business. I am convinced that you would wish me to do myself justice, and I don't think I can unless I reserve myself for the night and do not play in the day at all. I must beg of you therefore not to put me down for any matinée performance on Saturday, and if you think it right to make any alteration in your terms I, of course shall be happy to agree.

Sincerely yours

Charles F. Coghlan."

Miss Davenport played *Ophelia*, Davidge *Polonius*, Lewis *The First Gravedigger*, and Fisher *The Ghost*, after it had been declined (I think) by Harkins. It was for this or some such breach of contract that Harkins was now discharged from the company. His salary was \$200 per

week, and he had not played since his appearance as *Joseph Surface*. After the arrival of Coghlan it was difficult to suit him with parts in any play in which they were to act together. Upon his discharge he promptly sued for damages. In this place it may be interesting to note that Harkins, three years before, when Louis James got the part of *Yorick*, became so angered that he proposed to take a lease of the old Fifth Avenue Theatre (which Mr. Eno considered rebuilding) and running it in opposition to Daly. This was entirely proper, but when he proposed to do so while remaining in Daly's company, the manager raised his eyebrows. Harkins even claimed the right to recruit his new enterprise from other employees of Daly. It will hardly be credited, but the first recruit that offered was Louis James! This shows that the bond of fellowship is stronger than the obligations of loyalty. The manager is the common enemy.

To follow "*Lemons*," another farce from the German, "*Blue Glass*," was presented with Coghlan and Drew in the leading rôles. It happened just then that a delusion was prevalent concerning the therapeutic value of sun rays transmitted through the medium of blue glass, and this was seized upon to give a title to the play and to the supposed industrial stock in which the dramatic personæ were dabbling. The play was unsuccessful, although entertaining. Coghlan and Drew had congenial parts, and Miss Davenport, Mrs. Gilbert, Miss Righ, Miss Cowell, Brougham, Lewis, Fisher, and Hardenbergh lent their vivacity and buoyancy to the general effect, but without avail. Mr. Daly dragged it off, indignant at the waste of nights of toil, days of energetic preparation, wealth of scenery and professional ability. The resources of a well-equipped theatre enabled him to replace "*Blue Glass*" with a revival of importance — "*The*

Lady of Lyons." For this production Mr. Daly, for the first time, I believe, borrowed from a brother manager to fill out a cast. Wallack lent him Madame Ponisi for the *Widow Melnotte*.

A new play, brought out March 31, 1877, was "The Princess Royal" from the French "L'Officier de Fortune." The story was the love of the romantic Princess Amalie of Prussia for the adventurous Baron Trenck, whose memoirs were once a household book. One of the mechanical surprises of this play had been appropriated by Boucicault for his "Shaughraun," but a vast amount of original work was put in by Daly to assist its dramatic rather than its theatrical effects. The amount of scenery was stupendous and taxed the whole dimensions of the stage. All the company was required for the long list of characters, and J. B. Studley, a melodramatic performer of the old school, was specially engaged for *Korner, Captain of the Guard*. Coghlan was a dashing *Frederick Trenck*, and Miss Davenport a sumptuous *Princess*. In the original literary work upon this play my brother persuaded Bronson Howard, much against his will, to take a hand; but the gentle Howard's attempt at lurid melodrama proved "too 'orrible," and he was, greatly to his comfort, released. The "Princess Royal" was played five weeks at the Fifth Avenue and was then removed to the Grand Opera House, where it continued to flourish during the engagement, at the Fifth Avenue, of one of the most cherished daughters of the stage.

Adelaide Neilson's range of characters was limited for a star, as Jenny Lind's repertoire was limited for a prima donna; but there were actually no bounds to her control of her audiences, who hung upon her words and followed her motions with rapture. In recalling at this time the apparent sources of her charm, it seems to me

that everything she did appeared to be unconscious, and that her voice did not penetrate—it enveloped. The opening night was May 7, 1877; the play “Twelfth Night”; Miss Rigl *Olivia*, Sydney Cowell *Maria*, Davidge *Sir Toby*, Fisher *Malvolio*, Drew *Sir Andrew Aguecheek*, and Hardenbergh *The Clown*. On May 14 “Cymbeline” was revived for the first time in many years, with the exquisite star in the part of *Imogen*. Studley was *Iachimo*, Collier *Cymbeline*, Haworth *Gaius*, and Drew *Cloten*. The customary matinée had to be omitted in the “Cymbeline” week, on account of a brief note received by the manager:

“Friday.

Please come down & see me for a minute as soon as possible. I cannot play *Imogen* tonight & I want to see you to settle what we had better do. In haste

Yours

L. A. Neilson.”

She managed to get through with that Friday night's work, but had to rest all day Saturday. The next and closing week was largely occupied with “Romeo and Juliet,” Fisher playing *Mercutio*, Hardenbergh *Friar Lawrence*, and Crisp *Tybalt*. In these three revivals, Eben Plympton (specially engaged) enacted in turn *Sebastian*, *Posthumus*, and *Romeo*. The closing nights were taken up with benefits. On May 26 Miss Neilson's occurred, and she played *Pauline* to Coghlan's *Claude*, and *Juliet* to Rignold's *Romeo* in the balcony scene. The night after, for Miss Davenport's benefit, she played *Julia* to Coghlan's *Clifford* in “The Hunchback,” while Miss Davenport and Plympton were *Helen* and *Modus*, C. W. Couldock volunteering for *Master Walter*.

Mrs. Gilbert's fête took place on May 10 at a matinée



when, with other attractions, a company of society amateurs (Messrs. George Dusenberry, Henry Cushing, and J. H. Magee, Mrs. W. J. Torrey and Miss Ella R. Brady) appeared in the comedietta "The Area Belle"; and Robert Heller gave one of the best of his comic monologues, "The Boarding School Miss and her Piano Practice." At Mr. Fiske's benefit Miss Neilson, Miss Davenport, Rignold, and Sol Smith Russell were the volunteers, besides the whole company in the current play.

To Miss Neilson playgoers are indebted for the opportunity of seeing a Shakespearian play which, without an artist of her popularity, managers hesitate to present—"Measure for Measure" (1880). Had her strength been greater and her life been spared, she might have been in more than one way a benefactor to the modern theatre. In 1880 she died, in her thirty-fourth year. Romantic stories are told of her origin—of her rise through incredible hardships and her preservation through unthinkable experiences until, at twenty-four years of age (1870), she made her first decided impression on the stage. The most appreciative account of her life, as well as of her acting, is given by Mr. William Winter in his "Shadows of the Stage." As it cannot be uninteresting either as part of the history of the stage or of this favorite actress to know the business side of her engagement, it should be stated that she received forty-five per cent of the gross receipts of her performances.

The last production of this season was Mr. Daly's "Vesta," a version in English of Parodi's "Rome Vaincue," on May 28, 1877.

In *Posthumia*, the blind old crone, grandmother of the vestal *Opimia*, Miss Davenport made such an artistic transformation as had been admired in more than one of her notable rôles. The vestal was Miss Jeffreys Lewis.

The strong lines of the play were delivered by Frederick Warde, who was specially engaged for *Lentulus*, by Fisher as the senator *Fabius*, by Collier as the *Pontiff*, and Studley in the effective part of *Vestaeppor*, a Gallic slave. It was strong testimony to the respect in which my brother held his art, his theatre, and his public, that he brought out such a novelty at this time instead of being content (as one paper expressed it) "to patchwork the fag-end of his season with some old and worn attraction." Perhaps it is unreasonable to find fault with the want of public appreciation of that trait, but it seems hard to record that the public took no interest in this powerful drama. Perhaps there was again, as in the case of "Yorick," the need of some famous name to assure the playgoers that a new tragedy would be adequately presented. Miss Davenport had not the reputation of Ristori, and "Vesta," after one short week, was added to the list of plays which possess every merit but the power to fill the house.

On June 2 the season at the Fifth Avenue Theatre closed and rounded out a year of such work as, I think, no manager ever did before. Not only was every production — by stars as well as by the regular company — prepared, staged, and rehearsed by him, not only was every one of the innumerable details of the theatre personally superintended, but he presented six new plays, all worked over by his own pen. It was so far his hardest year.

## CHAPTER XVII

End of Daly's proprietorship of the Fifth Avenue Theatre. Ninth season, 1877-1878, abruptly ended with "The Dark City." Before that, preparations with new plays. W. D. Howells' comedietta. Efforts by Paul Fuller, Mrs. Rohlf, Cornelius Matthews, Joseph I. C. Clarke, and Bronson Howard. Production of "Ah Sin" by Bret Harte and Mark Twain. Distinguished house to greet it. Twain's witty response to his call. Harte's dry letter. Twain invents new business. Piece a dead loss. Edward F. Rice's burlesque "Evangeline" a success. Minor rôle essayed by Henry E. Dixey. Coghlan's desertion. A. M. Palmer approaches other members of the company. Death of E. L. Davenport; of George L. Fox, — "Humpty Dumpty"; of Matilda Heron. Bijou's indenture. Production of "The Dark City." Its failure. Rent of theatre demanded with threats of eviction. Instant surrender of theatre by Daly. The last straw. The fortunes he had made and where they had gone. The newspapers. War on ticket speculators. Wallack's custom. Kindness of dealers. Appreciation of authors. Bronson Howard's letter. The company assembled. Mrs. Gilbert goes to Palmer's. Her letter. Jefferson's engagement with Mr. Daly. Disappointment. A tour with Jefferson. More disappointment. Hard times. Sale of J. W. Wallack's Long Branch lots cheap. Death of Charles F. Briggs; of Seymour; of old Mr. Worrell; of Tom Placide. Last performances of Fanny Davenport in the Daly Company. Account of her subsequent career. Account of the Fifth Avenue Theatre after 1878. Its various managements as a star theatre. Daly's letters from the South. Observations on Southern cities emerging from the havoc of war and reconstruction. Efforts to get a theatre. Extension by his creditors. Sails for Europe.

THE requirements of the past season had prevented Augustin from staging Mr. W. D. Howells' first play, which had been announced as early as August, 1876:

"A new comedietta, 'The Parlor Car,' which has been accepted by Mr. Daly, is to be published in *The Atlantic Monthly*, the author preferring to have the piece criticised in advance."

It will be recalled that it was at Mark Twain's suggestion that Mr. Daly proposed to the editor of *The Atlantic Monthly* an excursion into the dramatic field, with the result now told in these letters:

Editorial office of *The Atlantic Monthly*.

The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass.

April 24, 1876.

My dear Sir

You have doubtless forgotten a very kind invitation you gave me something more than a year since to send you anything I might write in the way of a play; and it's with no purpose of trying to create a sense of obligation in you that I recall a fact so gratifying to myself.

Here is a little comedy which I have pleased myself in writing. It was meant to be printed in *The Atlantic*, (and so the stage direction, for the reader's intelligence, was made very full); but I read it to an actor the other day, and he said it would *play*; I myself had fancied that a drawing-room car on the stage would be a pretty novelty, and that some amusing effects could be produced by an imitation of the motion of a train, and the collision.

However, here is the thing. I feel so diffident about it, that I have scarcely the courage to ask you to read it. But if you will do so, I shall be very glad.

If by any chance it should please you, and you should feel like bringing it out on some off-night when nobody will be there, pray tell me whether it will hurt or help it, for your purpose, to be published in *The Atlantic*.

Yours truly

W. D. Howells.

Editorial office of *The Atlantic Monthly*.

The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass.

May 9, 1876.

My dear Mr. Daly

I am very much gratified that you like my little farce, though your kindness makes me feel its slightness all the more keenly.

If you think it will play, it is at your disposal; I could not imagine a better fortune for it than you suggest; and if it fails, I shall have the satisfaction — melancholy but entirely definite — of knowing that it was my fault. I suppose that even if my Parlor Car meets with an accident it need not telescope any future dramatic attempt of mine? I confide in your judgment and experience; and I am going to send you some half dozen pages more of this size, supplying some further shades of character in the lady's case, and heightening the effect of the catastrophe.

I expect to pass through New York on my way home from Philadelphia about the 28th, when I will make an effort to see you.

Very truly yours

W. D. Howells.

P.S. I went last night with Clemens to see poor Miss Dickinson make her *début*. It was sorrowfully bad, the acting, and the heaps of cut flowers for the funeral only made the gloom heavier."

While "The Parlor Car" was waiting to be attached to the first available train, the author was employing his spare hours in a dramatic work of more dignity: a comedy in four acts which was also to be submitted to the manager of the Fifth Avenue Theatre. It was completed in due time and read, but, not at all to the author's disappointment (for he said he had little hopes of its "theatricality"), it was found wanting.

Among the manuscripts received about this time were: one from the distinguished lawyer Mr. Paul Fuller, a play in four acts called "Peasant and Noble"; Miss Anna Katherine Green's first effort in the theatrical field; "Witchcraft," by a veteran playwright, Cornelius Matthews, who had been composing United States historical dramas for nearly half a century; and an American play by the amiable journalist, Joseph I. C.

Clarke. Bronson Howard ventured into a new field and forwarded from Detroit "The Tramp," which he had just finished.

A joint work of Bret Harte and Mark Twain saw the light at the Fifth Avenue Theatre on July 31, 1877, when "Ah Sin" was produced after much preliminary advertising. We remember a literary partnership attempted by Bret Harte and Boucicault. It had come to naught, and Harte finished his play without the aid of an expert in theatrical construction. It was produced at the Union Square Theatre in 1876 under the title of "Two Men of Sandy Bar," and failed. The press belabored it, and the amiable author immediately apologized. Stuart Robson took the chief part, and perhaps his unnatural enunciation—which was not only not Western, but not anything known to civilization—killed it. Robson's utterance was only fitted for the rankest burlesque. After that experience Harte and Mark Twain labored together, and the result was "Ah Sin."

There was a distinguished gathering on the first night, Sothorn, Boucicault and Brougham and all the literary lights in town being in the house. The authors were loudly called for, and Twain appeared, Harte being then in Washington. A speech being of course demanded, Twain, who was dressed quite appropriately for the season in a suit of white linen, responded with his usual gravity. Some of the papers next day thought the speech better than the play. Here it is:

"This is a very remarkable play. I don't know as you noticed it as it went along; but it is. The construction of this play and the development of the story are the result of great research, and erudition and genius, and invention—and plagiarism. When the authors wrote it they thought they would put in a great lot of catastrophes and murders and such

things, because they always enliven an evening so; but we wanted to have some disaster that wasn't hackneyed, and after a good deal of thought we hit upon the breaking down of a stage-coach. The worst of getting a good original idea like that is the temptation to overdo it; and in fact when the play was all done we found that we had got the stage-coach breaking down seven times in the first act. It was to come right along here every seven minutes or so, and spill all the passengers over on the musicians. Well, you see, that wouldn't do; it made it monotonous for the musicians; and it was too stagey; and we had to modify it; and there isn't anything left of the original plan now except one breakdown of the coach, and one carriage break-down, and one pair of runaway horses. Maybe we might have spared even some of these; but you see we had the horses, and we didn't like to waste them.

I wish to say also that this play is didactic rather than anything else. It is intended rather for instruction than amusement. The Chinaman is getting to be a pretty frequent figure in the United States, and is going to be a great political problem, and we thought it well for you to see him on the stage before you and to deal with that problem. Then for the instruction of the young we have introduced a game of poker. There are few things that are so unpardonably neglected in our country as poker. The upper class know very little about it. Now and then you find Ambassadors who have a sort of general knowledge of the game, but the ignorance of the people at large is fearful. Why, I have known clergymen, good men, kind-hearted, liberal, sincere and all that, who did not know the meaning of a 'flush'; it is enough to make one ashamed of one's species. When our play was finished, we found it was so long, and so broad, and so deep — in places — that it would have taken a week to play it. I thought that was all right; we could put 'To be continued' on the curtain, and run it straight along. But the manager said no; it would get us into trouble with the general public, and into trouble with the general government, because the Constitution forbids the infliction of such punishments as imprisonment, and the infliction of

out, and the more he cut out the better the play got. I never saw a play that was so much improved by being cut down; and I believe it would have been one of the very best plays in the world if his strength had held out so that he could cut out the whole of it."

The play showed such signs of weakness that Twain, after he went away and thought it over, devised new business for the Chinaman at the end of one of the acts, telegraphed it to Parsloe (Ah Sin) and sent a copy to the manager:

"Instead of blowing water, seize your brazier and blow a cloud of ashes. The men after sprawling and butting into each other will have their eyes full of ashes and in their blind fury will proceed to snatch each other by the throat — a natural thing for such ruffians to do; whereupon you smiling down upon them a moment, may sweetly say 'Me gottee gagement me no can waitee' or words to that effect and be sliding out as the curtain strikes the floor. Please try this tonight and telegraph me the result. The present ending would be full of points and a fine success in San Francisco where it would be understood, but we must manage to improve on it here. Be sure and try the above suggestion tonight unless you think of something stronger.

S. L. CLEMENS."

But this did not save the play. The receipts gradually dwindled week by week for five weeks, with considerable loss to Daly.

In the excitement of the first night the anxious Bret Harte, away in Washington, was forgotten; and the oversight drew from him a reasonable remonstrance:

"... There is, I believe, somewhere up in Hartford an agent and lawyer of Mr. Clemens, who is at some time to furnish accounts &c. — to me possibly — but he doesn't, he says, know anything about the play since it was played in Washing-



ton. I don't want any accounts from you or Parsloe, only a simple expression of your opinion as to whether the play was or was not successful, and as one of its authors, this does not seem to me to be an inconsistent request or calculated to wound anybody's — say Parsloe's — sensitive nature. It is the mere courtesy of business.

Send me a line.

Yours truly,  
Bret Harte.

A. Daly Esq.  
5th Ave. Theatre."

Before the production of "Ah Sin," Edward F. Rice's burlesque "Evangeline" was brought out. "Evangeline" was quite a success. Miss Eliza Weathersby was in it with Nat C. Goodwin, George S. Knight (made up to resemble Major General B. F. Butler, late of New Orleans), Harry Hunter, and many others. The programme announced as a special feature that Messrs. R. Golden and H. E. Dixey, as *The Two Deserters*, would execute the "Heifer Dance." This novelty was accomplished, and left so deep an impression as to give rise in after years to the legend that Mr. Dixey's début on the stage was in the character of Hind Legs. Passing over the inaccuracy as to the legs (he was to the fore), the fact is that the first appearance of this excellent comedian was in his early boyhood in Boston, and that he played many parts before he frolicked in "Evangeline."

The plans for the new season included an engagement of Joseph Jefferson, who was expected early in October from England after an absence of two years, and who was to play eight weeks at the Fifth Avenue Theatre for seven hundred dollars each performance. Before the season opened dissatisfaction manifested itself in the company. Coghlan was not pleased with the numerous changes of bills, and his agents, Lewis and

to complain. Both gentlemen, and Miss Sydney Cowell, appear to have been invited to a chat with Mr. Palmer of the Union Square. Coghlan was the only one that Palmer succeeded in getting; but he was a severe loss to Daly.

At the beginning of the season, the death of F. L. Davenport seriously affected his daughter, who hurried to his bedside. Daly's tribute to Davenport was: "The ripest student, the ablest actor, the honestest man of the stage in his generation."

In this year also died poor *Humpty Dumpty*, George L. Fox, who broke down completely soon after his fiasco at the Broadway, and Matilda Heron, yet a young woman. In looking over old papers I found the writing by which Mrs. Stoepel committed her little daughter Bijou to Mr. Daly for the part of *Adrienne* in "Monsieur Alphonse" (1874):

"Having the utmost confidence in Mr. Daly's moral care of my child I hereby contract my daughter Bijou Heron, who is under age, to the professional supervision of Augustin Daly Esqr. manager of the Fifth Avenue Theatre, for the purpose of perfecting by experience and practice the histrionic talents which she inherits from me; & for the purpose of intensifying my instructions in the art of acting; & for availing herself of the advantages of Mr. Daly's Theatre; but I understand that this does not carry the custody of my daughter when not acting."

And the renewal contract next year is subscribed:

"In full confidence in Mr. Daly, as authorized by well-tryed experience of his faithful care of my daughter Bijou Heron, I herewith subscribe my name, fully endorsing the above.

Matilda Heron."

"The Dark City" was the title given to the new play which the manager prepared for the opening of his sea-

son, and an enormous amount of time and trouble was spent upon it. It was a decided departure from the "society dramas" which had for years been seen on the Fifth Avenue stage. Miss Dyas was to create the part of the wronged orphan *Sybil Chase* and Miss Rigl that of the spoiled beauty *Rula*. The scenery, like that of "Under the Gaslight," exhibited localities familiar to explorers of Old New York.

The new play, in spite of the intelligence and labor spent upon it, was an immediate failure. It had no public in that theatre. It was not below the taste of its patrons any more than Parodi's tragedy was above it; both were out of sympathy with the Fifth Avenue audiences, that was all. How the new piece might have been received in the days when Augustin's sensational dramas crowded his early theatres can only be conjectured; the one thing material was that it failed him just when he needed a success, and a great success, to float him over the shallows. His responsibilities were enormous; and when the first instalment of rent for September was due, and he was unable to pay it, it was clamored for with threats of ejection. This demand to a man of sensitive spirit, who had been for nearly five years — during the worst financial panic the country had ever known — working so indomitably in the face of defections, desertions, and violent competition, roused in him a fierce and resentful spirit. When the threat of ejection was uttered, he instantly offered to surrender the theatre. The surprised lessors could only accept. They had been discontented. One complaint on their part was Daly's unsociability and unapproachability — characteristics which seem to awaken in persons who have never even met their supposed possessors, a sense of personal resentment. Then there was gossip, utterly baseless, that he

had made several fortunes and squandered them. The fact is that he lived in a modest style, kept no horses, no yacht, no country house. His sole luxury was a library, the accumulation of ten years, which when sold brought only \$8000, and which he had already pledged to pay his theatre expenses. What became of the fortunes he had made may be gathered from these pages—over a thousand dollars lost in the Grand Opera House, fifteen thousand spent in fitting up anew the Twenty-fourth Street house, thirty thousand lost by the fire, thirty-five thousand for remodelling 728 Broadway, over forty thousand for furnishing the house in twenty-eighth Street, in addition to the losses of five seasons.

To understand how Mr. Daly could bring himself to sacrifice in a moment his past and perhaps his future, and resign the position which had been the goal of his ambition, we have to consider how little calculation or self-interest sways a man of his nature, smarting under a sense of unworthy treatment. This was the second time his landlords had threatened him with ejectment. The first time was when he was pushed to the wall by the injunctions against his performance, obtained two years before by Wallack. The present threat was the last straw laid upon the back of an overburdened man.

When arrangements for the surrender of the theatre were in progress, the lessors experienced some regret for the turn affairs had taken, but it was too late; the news had got abroad. The lease and arrears of rent were cancelled in consideration of the lessee leaving half his scenery and all his furnishings and equipments, including the seats in the theatre. As his own comment on this event I find a single line in his hand: "Negotiations concluded. \$45,000 for \$8,300, and peace and rest."

The affair startled the newspapers. The journals

recalled Daly's exploits, the favorites of the stage he had helped to develop, the companies with which he had spanned the continent, the list of successful plays he had written, the disasters he had overcome. All but one voiced regret at his retirement; that one, to the general amazement, observed that it was surprising so little sympathy was expressed for him in the theatrical profession!

It was hard to say whom he could possibly have injured in his career, except perhaps the ticket speculators. He did manifest towards them hardness of heart. He originated in the very first year of management in the little twenty-fourth Street house a plan to circumvent them. It had been a crying shame at Wallack's that when a successful play created a demand, the house was practically sold out at once to a speculator whose agents retailed the tickets in the lobby day and night at an advance. It had been done at other theatres. It was a business-like way of taking advantage of an excessive demand and a limited supply, and practically doubling the receipts of the house.

As to sympathy in the profession, it was manifested in letters from actors in his company and out of it, and from managers in other cities; and it is especially worthy of note that the business houses with which he dealt refrained from troubling him during this stress. One of them wrote him immediately upon receiving back an invoice of goods they had just sent:

"We simply offer you our humble helping hand, *i.e.*, if you want to resume business in this City in your professional pursuit, we will furnish to your order for the next twelve months to come such goods as we keep in our establishment which you may need in your business if you want to avail yourself thereof."

I have found many letters testifying to his personal and business courtesy and generosity. Bronson Howard, in a letter to Florence (May 14, 1877), in relation to a play to be written for the latter and produced at the Fifth Avenue, bears this testimony :

"I think you had better talk to Daly and so have a three-cornered talk on the subject. He is crammed full of good ideas. You may depend on this in reference to Daly. If he sees a better chance for a popular success in the suggestion I make than in the ideas now in his own head he will not let any desire to do his own piece weigh an ounce in making his decision. This is one of his strongest peculiarities. I can assure you of this from my personal experience. He offered me his title of Divorce long before he used it himself. Read him any suggestions for the play and write to me. . . ."

Augustin inscribed in his box-office book under the head of *9th Season, 7th week, 47th performance* :

"The end of the first book ! To night A. D. retires from the theatre he built up."

\* \* \* \* \*

The company was called to the green-room on Monday, September 10, (1877), and informed that Mr. Daly would withdraw from the theatre when the curtain fell on Saturday night; that he proposed to carry on his season by a tour to various cities, and that he would take with him everybody who was willing to come. Miss Dyas asked to be permitted to retire. Miss Davenport, who was starring, was not concerned in the immediate situation. Lewis was very discontented, and before the week was out Mr. Daly begged him to better himself elsewhere. Fisher was too old to travel. Some members of the company had already received offers from other managers, and among them was Mrs. Gilbert, who was sought at

once by Palmer. She remained with Mr. Daly until the last night, and by that time he had learned that she had accepted an engagement at the Union Square. We can conjecture what his countenance told her from the letter she wrote when she went home:

Dear Governor

“Saturday Night.

My heart is very full and sore. I grieve more than you know when I have done anything that angers or even displeases you. I have almost unconsciously clung to you for sympathy and comfort in my loneliness, and to feel now that I have been misjudged hurts me. I have no business to trouble you with all this, but I feel that I must ease my heart some way before I go to bed.

I admit I should have seen you before I answered Mr. Palmer's letter, but even so I don't see what excuse I could have made for refusing. He would be sure to think it came from you, and that would be very undesirable.

Very sincerely  
Grandma.”

Keeping up his spirits, the still youthful manager departed with his faithful few; and a message to me in cheerful vein gives some of his experiences:

Dear Brother,

“Baltimore, Oct. 7th, 1877.

In Paterson, & face to face with \$167 worth of people. The rain drowned out or washed out the orchestra I had engaged, and none turned up for the performance:—so at the eleventh (or seventh) hour I had a piano brought in, and had Sydney Cowell to play it between the acts. Sydney had by some lucky chance met some of the ladies of the Company that day in New York, & had come over to Paterson with them, on a lark. She came to scoff—& remained to play. Thus did I grind good out of evil. Amen!—Saturday evening I produced *Divorce* in Wilmington . . . the house was filled—and I think I begin to see daylight from this indication.”

He came back to open Booth's Theatre for Jefferson's engagement. Jefferson assented to the transfer on condition that he got more money; cabling:

"Will consent on condition of receiving clear half after eighteen hundred in addition to the seven hundred."

This was acceded to, and Jefferson began on October 29, 1877, with "Rip Van Winkle." It was, as I have said, his first appearance after an absence of two years, and he anticipated very large business, as is indicated by his providing for the event of the nightly receipts exceeding \$1800. As it turned out, they averaged only \$1274 per night for his four weeks, or twenty-four performances. He received \$700 each time he played more than his manager got. He was probably not fully conscious of the low level to which theatrical business as well as all other business had settled down in the United States. Reference has not been made to one cause of it -- the extensive and violent railroad strike which paralyzed the country in the summer of 1877. Riots accompanied the strike in the West and South, and were apprehended in New York, where anarchist meetings were held in the squares. Mob demonstrations were, however, checked by prompt military precautions, the various regiments of the National Guard being openly drilled at night on the streets in front of their armories to exhibit their preparedness for trouble.

Mr. Daly was of course not alone among theatrical managers to suffer from this culmination of the long financial distress. Most of them resorted to the expedient of "papering" their houses (Sothorn would have called it "protecting"); but Augustin, like the firm old business man his father-in-law Duff, disliked to hoodwink the public. It was reported that the overwhelming



crowds at one large theatre represented \$2000 and yet the actual receipts were only \$400. The manager of another large theatre, one of the finest in the city and in the country, invented the ingenious scheme of attracting the populace by reducing the price of admission to twenty-five cents, and when he got the crowd in, charging them twenty-five cents more for a seat. Wallack, while his own theatre was open, played at the Grand Opera House at cheap prices. As an indication of the ebb in realty values at this period, it is enough to say that the fine country estate of J. W. Wallack at Long Branch, being put up at auction in separate lots (August, 1877), brought only \$80 to \$95 per city lot. Even Augustin could afford to bid for four of them at that price, and then the rest were withdrawn. Real estate investments, by the way, have ever been favorites with theatrical folk — the ambition of those wandering tribes being the acquisition of a home. Adelaide Neilson this year parted with some holdings of hers — four lots on the northeast corner of Broadway and eighty-first Street.

Augustin's early friend, Charles Frederic Briggs, died this year (June 21, 1877), and I find this memorandum concerning him :

"C. F. B. was the first editor who gave me any encouragement to persevere at the outset of my literary career. I offered him my first contribution when he was editor of the *Courier* — 1859 — and it was accepted, and step by step he advanced me. His kindness was maintained to the end and in *The Independent* he has uttered some of his cheeriest words of me."

There was published about this time an account of Sardou's lean and hungry youth. When his "Pattes de Mouche" was accepted by Dejazet, he confided to a friend that it was his last chance, and said, "If I fail, I

shall sail for the United States to-morrow and try my luck at journalism"!

Seymour of the *Times*, an esteemed associate of the old days when Augustin was dramatic reviewer, died in May. Of this excellent musical and dramatic critic, his friend significantly writes "A gentleman." The decease of old Mr. Worrell, once a famous circus clown, recalled his ambitious parental effort to set his three daughters on the road to fortune when he leased the old New York Theatre; and the unhappy ending of Thomas Placide, "poor stem of a fine old stock," awoke memories of the Burton days. Placide ended a romantic history by disregarding the "canon 'gainst self-slaughter." He had retired from the stage about 1867.

To return to the season at Booth's: Disappointed with the result of it, Mr. Jefferson refused to remain there longer than four weeks, but agreed to try his fortune in other cities upon a tour with Augustin as manager. They opened in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and the morning of their arrival he and Augustin visited the grave of the elder Jefferson. In the evening a house of only \$608 (of which Joseph got one-half) greeted the famous *Rip Van Winkle*, who must have thought that he was still asleep and having a bad dream. The idea of the tour was soon abandoned, and Augustin set out with his company upon his own account.

The season at Booth's, so abruptly terminated, was filled out by Miss Davenport, whom Mr. Daly brought in for "As You Like It" and "The School for Scandal" during the holidays. After that she went with the Daly company on its tour of four months. This was her last appearance under his management. Afterwards she engaged a company of her own. The following year she played at the Union Square Theatre in Will's drama-

tization of "The Vicar of Wakefield," called "Olivia," and impersonated the lovely and wronged heroine with touching sympathy and effect. For twenty years afterwards she continued to be a prominent figure on the American stage. Her last appearance in New York was at the Fifth Avenue Theatre in February, 1898, in "La Tosca," and her regretted death occurred in the September following, in her forty-eighth year. She was twice married, both times to actors: in 1879 to E. F. Price and in 1888 to Melvin McDowell.

It may not be out of place here to give an account of the Fifth Avenue Theatre after Mr. Daly left it. To the general surprise, it was opened by Messrs. Fiske and Harkins. It was doubtless an exaggerated idea of the value of their property, and a notion that only mismanagement on Mr. Daly's part had prevented the theatre being crowded to the doors whenever they were opened, that induced the lessors' peremptoriness, and it must have been illuminating to them to find that the only bidders for the place were the late lessee's former business manager and a former member of his company. The new managers set out to reverse the Daly policy and to conduct the place strictly as a star theatre. Unencumbered by an expensive company, they kept it going for the remainder of that season, introducing (for the first time) Mary Anderson and Madame Modjeska, and miscellaneous entertainments including English opera and pantomime. A second season, though it repeated the Anderson and Modjeska engagements, supplemented by one of Booth and one of Jefferson, lost money so rapidly that it ended disastrously in January, 1879, with a strike for salaries behind the scenes, the familiar proceedings to dispossess the tenants for non-payment of rent, and, in addition, a bitter litigation between the

partners. Mr. Fiske then withdrew and Mr. Harkins took another partner, but after further unavailing effort he also relinquished his hold.

After several brief experiments by different managers the theatre was taken in 1880 by Haverly, a speculator in negro-minstrelsy. He was replaced in 1882 by John Stetson, who spent on theatres the money made with a sensational newspaper. He was succeeded in 1888 by Eugene Tompkins of Boston, and in 1890 by Harry Miner, an impresario from the Bowery and Eighth Avenue. On January 2, 1891, the theatre was destroyed by fire — eighteen years, almost to a day, after its beautiful predecessor, the first Fifth Avenue Theatre, met with the same fate. When each fire occurred, Miss Davenport was playing — the last time, as a star; and on this occasion she lost the scenery and costumes of her "Cleopatra." Fortunately this fire, like the other, occurred after a performance. Daly never reëntered the building as a manager after he left it in 1877. Sixteen months after its destruction in 1891, it was rebuilt and relet to Miner and resumed its career as an industrial enterprise. In the fall of 1898 Mr. Daly's musical company with "The Runaway Girl" was transferred to it from Daly's Theatre and continued there its remarkably successful career. Of late years the theatre has been devoted to vaudeville and other light amusements.

The chronicle of Augustin's tour of 1877-1878 is contained in letters from Syracuse, Richmond, Raleigh, Charleston, Savannah, New Orleans, Mobile, and Nashville. Their interest consists in the observations they contain upon the cities of the old South as they emerged from the desolation of war and reconstruction.

“Richmond, Jan. 29, '78.

Here I am at the Portal of the sunny south. My waking sight of ole Virginny from the car window yesterday morning fell upon puddly lands, broken fences, lonely-looking frame houses and sleepy-looking darkies driving depressed-looking teams. An hour later we rattled into Richmond — whose neglected outskirts gave little promise of the livelier condition within. I have had two walks over the city, and one thing impresses me first of all & in contrast to our trim and sightly prospects north and west — & that is the carelessness of appearance, & slovenliness of outside all the public buildings have here. The R. R. Station is a shed built years since beside an unkept road, into whose muddy depths the passenger sinks, to his own disquiet & the delight of the multitude of bootblacks who hover about the scene like hyenas waiting their prey. Everything presents a lively bustling air, however, and I liken the city to one awakening from a long sleep.

I haven't seen a *single* darkey since I got in. They all appear to be married & have large families or lots of relations. They swarm, & come & go in swarms. I have been run down for passes by the sprightly mulatto chambermaids & the dusky office boys & the native maroon table attendants — but in each & every instance they wanted 'em for three or four: for their 'bressed little chillern' or 'de ole woman & de chile' or 'my gal, boss, & her mudder' or 'me & my brudder' and sich like. There is a 'Nigger Heaven' (as the third tier is called in 'Troy) here, & as 'tis very capacious I have been liberal with my pencilled passes, & I expect to be sung in Hymns at 'de Tabby Nuckle' next 'Sabbath.' ”

“Raleigh, N. C. Feb'y. 1st, 1878.

My foot is on my native heath, my name's — As You Like It. But alas, I must be dead to all emotion. I neither thrilled nor throbbed. To be sure *once* I did think I felt a sort of elevating and ennobling emotion, and I was beginning to think better of myself — but I had hardly got my Pride & Patriot-

ism well kindled when the brutal conductor informed me I was still some miles from the border line, & I wilted at once.

To-night we are in Raleigh — a city without a paved street, & yet an extensive & important-looking place. At any rate its citizens have turned out to-night *en masse*, headed by the Governor (not that Governor of North Carolina who made the historical remark to the Governor of South Carolina) but Governor Vance, to whom I was introduced & whom I escorted to a box amid the enthusiastic approbation of the entire audience. Everybody seems to know I'm a native — & they welcome me as a brother. I have been presented already (here five hours only) to eighty-seven colonels and a hundred and forty-nine majors. The Judiciary have been backward — the Attorney General is the nearest approach to the wool-sack I've met.

Yesterday — (or rather last night) — I was in Norfolk, & after the play I took a ramble by myself over our old walks. . . . A spot I lingered near longest was the old ground where the circus used to pitch its tents, — the back stairs of the theatre land upon the identical field; there and near Scott's old school house; and the little tobacco shop (replaced by a much grander one) where you invested Santa Claus's money that fatal Christmas in your first & *last* plug of Virginia Honey-Comb.”<sup>1</sup>

“Savannah, Feb. 12, '78.

I have heard Savannah called the Garden City of the South — but to me it looks like a city of decay. There is not a sign of newness about the place from the river bank to the limits. Everything looks as though it stood just where it grew with the town — unaltered; unimproved; undestroyed; and simply enduring with Time the storms of the years and the seasons' changes. The sidewalks are paved — but the drives are unstoned. At every other square the streets are blocked by a little park — of crosswalks & grass plots and a mound of shrubs or a fountain. The houses are mostly low & squatty as

<sup>1</sup> I was six years old on that occasion.

though designed to meet the shock of earthquakes. The Theatre is the oddest old building you ever saw; built seventy years ago upon the English model; and it remains almost unchanged. The Parquette is called the Pit — & the balcony the dress circle. The seats are plain straight benches with a little tuft for a seat — & a narrow strip of uncovered wood for a back. Remnants of the old-style English boxes still exist on the second tier — but the 'Gentry' no longer resort to them & they are mostly occupied by the manly 'sect.' The proscenium is very old & odd too and has an opening each side for the stars to answer calls without disturbing the curtain.

I believe 'tis the oldest theatre in America now, since the Holiday Street house in Baltimore was burned. And its very dinginess is suggestive. Kean & Booth & Macready & Fanny Kemble & Charles Kemble and Ellen Tree and the elder Mathews and all the lights of Art so long sunken in their sockets flashed forth from these creaky boards their brightest fires — & warmed two generations past into enthusiasm.

I cannot fall in love exactly with Savannah, spite of its memories & its warm welcome; mostly, I think, because it seems to lack the elements of life. It is clouded — and shrouded. There is a moss which hangs upon every tree in & out of it, obscuring the foliage, & covering it like a heavy grey cobweb. You will see whole Avenues of handsome trees engloomed with this moss — which in the early sunrise is said to look beautiful, sprinkled with dew & reflecting the rays of the rising sun in a million diamond drops; but something of this web-like moss seems to over-spread the city — and give it a cemetery look.

I liked Charleston better. Out of New York I've seen no city so handsome; none so wakeful and full of life & spirit . . . Some of the finest mansions of the country are standing here almost in the very heart of the town; and round The Battery — a Park very much like our own Battery — is a street shaped like a crescent & lined with a succession of grand old-fashioned mansions; with triple-tiered terraces; roomy

yards & gardens — where orange trees abound; and fenced in by massive brick walls & old-fashioned gateways, with their tinselled iron ornaments.”

“New Orleans, February 19th, '78.

I think I wrote you last from Savannah; the city upon whose rising head some almighty power seems to have placed its hand years ago, and said to it: stand still. My next jump was to Macon — along the line of Sherman's march: it was a dreary sort of day through a dreary sort of country returning again to its cotton prosperity. We stopped for dinner at an imposing-looking wooden mansion reached by some fifty steps (more or less) where I struck the first novelty of Southern menu — syrup pie! a mixture of meal & molasses baked tart style in a crust. One bite was sufficient! The taste haunts me at times since with spectral horrors. Our train this same day stopped at a wood station to wood up, just as Robinson's Circus was letting out. It was one of the strangest of sights. Scarcely half a dozen houses in sight — yet a thousand residents of the surrounding country gathered here in wagons, on mule back, and in ox teams. I seemed to be recognized on the platform by some of ‘the boys’ — for they made a dash for me, & I was speedily introduced to ‘Old John Robinson's bulliest son,’ & to ‘Our Jester,’ and the ‘celebrated summer-set rider,’ & many others too numerous to mention but equally rough & dirty, & equally ‘proud to shake hands with me.’ They were all happy; only gave day performances, to save gas; & were unanimous in denouncing the license laws of Georgia. At the next town I got the enclosed letter from one of the boys — which I think you will smile over. . . .

Well, St. James & St. Giles parted — after quite a fraternization of the two companies — (Tommy Jefferson & the Jester of the Arena even shedding tears on shaking hands) and we got on to Macon. . . .

After Macon I spent a few hours in Atlanta, which I saw (unfavorably) in a shower. But it looks large & lively. The Theatre is long, low & churchlike with square galleries — like



most of these country theatres; but it promised to be fairly full. After Atlanta came Montgomery. Years ago I think I called the town of Cairo, Ill., the hole of creation; it being the dirtiest city I had ever laid eyes on. But Cairo is a parlor compared to Montgomery, Ala. And why the place should be kept so filthy I cannot understand. The streets are broad & handsome (though unpaved), the houses are substantial, of brick & stone, & are really very finely built. . . . But hotels, theatres, & stores are absolutely filthy. The scrub brush has not polluted their grimy floors or sides for years. Whitewash is unknown and paint is prohibited. Even the broom & duster appear to be scarcely-known articles of civilization. Pigs without number & of every size are as plentiful in the streets as dogs & cats are in New York — & I have seen the frolicksome calf indulging its appetite by its parent's side in the public gutter — which by the way was grass-grown, sunny & dusty. Cows wander about the streets loosely. A fountain of green stagnant water fills the public square, round which the negro marketwomen gathered the day I was there — to the number of 2 or 3 score, — giving the only gay & festal look to the city I could see. . . . The Shaughraun was played here last week & was a dire failure — the wake scene being rotten-egged three nights in succession, — till it was cut out.

(The Enclosure :)

Brown's Hotel, Macon, Ga., Feb. 10th 1878.

Sir

I am A young man 20 years of Age. I have been travelling With old John Robinson's Circus and Menagerie. I play B. flat Cornet in the Band and now I would like to leave this show and travel with your Company to take Charge of Property and play B. flat Cornet in your Orchestra, and that will save you the trouble of hiring A Cornet player in every town you go to and I will work for the Moderate Salary of 10 Dollars A Week and Expenses. I want to get with A Hall Show the Worst way please Write and let me know if you can give me A Snap or not. I understand the Business as I have traveled

with other theatre Companys and I can furnish you Recommends as I am Strictly temperate and would be A good Dresser if you will want me please Answer Immediately and Direct to Davisboro georgia as that is where we will be on the 16th of this Month and I see that you are Billed to be here on the 14th so please Write or telegraph."

"St. Charles Hotel, New Orleans, Feb. 24, '78.

New Orleans is a disappointing city. . . . I have read in one of the local sheets however that 'though peace & quiet have come to the city — never was business so dull — want so prevalent — nor suffering so universal.' Still the papers are sad liars. For instance I read every day letters from New Orleans in the New York Herald — how 'excitement is at fever heat about the Returning Board trials,' how 'the scenes of a year ago are revived' & how 'the political situation looks grave'! When the fact is, there is not half as much fuss, talk or fever about the courts, hotels or street corners — where you generally look for 'excitement' — as there is in a New York country village. The Returning Board has not demanded any passes to see Pique — and no one threatened us with the vengeance of the White League unless we issued compliments to the city officials. The negro is not rampant — nor in any way offensively prominent. He is quite as deferential as the Hortiest Sutherer! could desire. I was standing beside a white brother yesterday, & he hailed an ebony swell in a stove-pipe who was passing with a familiar 'Hello Jim' — & Hello Jim replied with 'He, he, how — yeh?' and I was informed that Jim was a senator. He seemed to wear his honors easily. 'Policy' rules the day here, I fear, rather than Politics. I've taken three nibbles myself, but got bitten, & so I've reformed. They have daily drawings & monthly drawings — & the little blue tickets hang in alluring hundreds on strings in every cigar store window. You can buy one number for twenty-five cents, or two numbers for fifty cents or four for a dollar: & run a chance of getting \$1,000. The entire Fifth Avenue Company laid in a stock of numbers one morning and

went about the streets for several hours swelled with anticipated possession until about four o'clock, when the wheel was turned, and they all glided back to their several cots collapsed and misanthropic comedians.

Between soda water at five cents a glass & Lottery Tickets at a quarter a number — the happy & open-mouthed visitor in New Orleans relieves his person of much dollars. Every alternate shop upon the festive streets of this city has a soda fountain; I never saw so many. I wonder how the city escapes a grand human explosion. . . . Yesterday I started out on a search. I began at the north & explored east & west & went due south — throughout the New City and the old — in the American quarter & among the French colony — but in vain I looked: nowhere could I find — a Basement or a Cellar! New Orleans is absolutely without such a luxury.

One thing about this city you would admire, I think; & that is the way in which it hedges in its courts with quiet. While the judicial officers are sitting they stretch chains across the crossings which guard the approaches to the Court buildings; & put up iron signs on which are inscribed:

Halt!! The Court is open.

The City is quite gay just now — on the eve of Mardi-Gras. Every train brings fresh arrivals from the rural districts and from the northern cities — & the hotels & boarding houses are filling up. The streets are lively with processions & bands. Next week we are to have a torchlight turnout of the Mystic Knights of Mornus, and this being one of the big events of the season we have to close the theatre as no one will pay a dollar to go inside. N. O. is not behind its Northern rivals in preferring the Free Show to the Pay Performance. . . .

I wrote to Mary the other day about my books, &c. — But it has occurred to me perhaps I could sell off all my pictures, bronzes and superfluous furniture & save my books. I fear if I have to sacrifice those printed treasures this time I'll never have ambition to buy another book again or build another home."

Having completed his season and fulfilled his contracts with his company, the manager returned to New York to consider obtaining a new theatre. Mr. Eno, proprietor of the site on which the first Fifth Avenue stood, and who remembered the early successes of Daly there, made him the following propositions: To let the new hall as it stood for \$10,000 per annum for ten years, the lessee to convert it into a theatre at a cost ranging from \$40,000 to \$70,000, or the lessor to build the theatre and lease it for \$15,000 per annum, or the lessor and tenant to share such cost, in which case the rent would be \$12,000. Fortunately Augustin did not close with any of these propositions, which, however, were not illiberal; but his judgment then was that the property was too small for the general purposes of theatrical business, and the proposed term of ten years too brief for an investment. Meanwhile, preparations were on foot for whatever theatre might be acquired. Augustin wrote to Bronson Howard to attach him to the enterprise, and proposed an engagement to Miss Ethel. The replies were encouraging.

One preliminary essential to resuming business was to obtain an extension from the creditors who were left outstanding when the Twenty-eighth Street house was closed. In this project he was assisted by his counsel, Mr. Richard M. Henry, and they set out together on one of the hottest days of the season. With the strain of his anxieties, he was prostrated completely by heat and exhaustion, but he was able to write that he found "the creditors generally very nice."

One site for a theatre he always favored; it was that which eventually became Daly's Theatre, but the expense of fitting it for his purpose and the still uncertain theatrical business made him pause; and he resolved to use the time of waiting in a visit — his first — abroad:

“I feel that it would be wholly impossible for me to remain in New York — *idle* — for a year, or even for a month if I had no prospect of work at the end of it; and so I have made up my mind to make a trip over the sea; — perhaps *there* I may find a market, which is closed to me here. At all events I can but try. The effort will keep me busy, and if I fail I have become so used to disappointments now, that one more will not hurt me worse than idleness here without any effort or any hope at all. . . .

I got nearly all my creditors to sign the extension — & I shall feel better to leave the matter that way. In 2 years some change must occur. It cannot be for the worse — for that is impossible; unless it be Death steps in — and I believe firmly that in some way or other I shall rise above all my worries and anxieties & debts, within that time.”

On the 28th of August, 1877, Augustin sailed on the *Italy* for London. His brother-in-law James Duff was to have been his companion, but at the last moment business compelled him to stay over for another steamer, and we regretfully saw my brother depart alone.



FOURTH PERIOD: 1877-1879





## CHAPTER XVIII

First impression of London in the seventies. Concert at Covent Garden. Gaiety Theatre, and Terry as *Jeames Yellowplush*. Sunday. London indifference. The Adelphi Theatre. Alhambra Music Hall and Prince of Wales Theatre. Temple Garden. The Alexandra Theatre, Liverpool. First view of Irving. Haymarket Theatre and H. J. Byron. Introduction to the editors of the *Era* and the *Figaro*. Lodgings in Jermyn street. Folly theatre. The Crystal Palace. The Abbey. Mrs. John Wood. Her characteristic letters. Visit to Finchley Burgess, the great minstrel. Lionel Brough. Farjeon and his wife Margaret Jefferson. Visit to Mrs. Wood. Arthur Cecil of the Prince of Wales and Terry of the Gaiety. Drury Lane and the "Winter's Tale." English audiences contrasted with American. Canterbury Music Hall. Nelly Powers' Irish song. Bartoletti. Grecian Theatre, and George Conquest in one of his "thrillers." Glimpse of Beaconsfield. Greenwich, but no whitebait. Richmond, and maids of honor. Rochester and Edwin Drood's crypt. Gadshill. "The Lady of Lyons Married and Settled." Dinner at the Garrick Club. Cordiality of old actors and new journalists. George Conquest a "Gaslight" pirate, now leading a better life. Remarkable runs of plays. First night verdict never considered final. Invitation to the Labouchères. Dinner at the Savage club. Manager of Drury Lane. "Uncle Tom's Cabin" running at five theatres. Opposition not harmful in London, each theatre having its own public. "Negro" dialect on the English stage. Pope's villa at Twickenham. Henrietta Hodson. Strawberry Hill. Visit to the Queen's Laundry. Failure of the bank of Glasgow. Wilkie Collins. Bijou Heron at school in Paris. Irving gets the Lyceum Theatre. The Olympic, Coleman and Neville. Mr. and Mrs. German Reed's entertainments. Corney Grain charming. Nothing suitable for America except "Pinafore." Theory of a successful theatre. Slowness in preparing plays in London. Warmth and constancy of English audiences. A visit to the criminal courts. Observations on the mode of trials.

"London, September 12, '78.

I trod the dust of the Mighty City — (Good name for a play that!) for the first time on Tuesday, coming upon it from the Fenchurch St. Station of the Overground R. R. If Wall St. Ferry were a R. R. depot it would give you an idea of what part of the city I saw first. The day was lovely — so far the augury was good. . . . The sail up the Thames from its mouth was most interesting. Gravesend gives you the first radical change of town scenery, and the difference between the odd old houses there and those of our own dear land is most decided. The river is the most wriggle'y stream I ever saw. One of the spots which recalled my old 5th Ave. days was Tilbury Fort. I thought I saw the two beefeaters asleep in front of it — & almost heard Matthews directing the rehearsal of *The Critic*. . . . So far I have turned my saunterings into the city proper — have seen a London fire, a London fog, and a London rain — all of them quite like our own. I have also seen a London Beadle — a Parochial Beadle, coat, staff, cocked hat & all. I nearly capsized at the sight, — I thought it was Davidge at first. Have found that this city is also blessed with an unfinished court house, which is called the Palace of Justice, and in which all the Courts of Law are to be moved when it is finished; it has been as long building (and is not half up) — and has cost nearly as much money as the late Mr. Tweed's little affair. I am doing a deal of walking to keep my spirits up — for spite of the busy & novel scenes about me I am terribly lonely. I have spent an evening at Covent Garden Theatre listening to a concert, and one at the Gaiety Theatre. . . . I have seen no one yet who would make any great hit in N. Y. Terry the comedian at the Gaiety is good, but he is too popular here for his own good, for he does not act earnestly. I saw him in a very clever adaptation of Thackeray's 'Jeames Yellow-Plush,' which though appreciated here would hardly make a hit in New York."

“‘Morleys,’ London — Sunday, Sept. 15, ’78.

I have a dull overclouded day for my first Sunday in London. I went to the oratory at Brompton this morning. . . . Sunday is quite as quiet here as it is in N. Y., and I fancy from the advertising columns that much *excursioning* is done. Indeed so far I get but this impression of difference between the two cities (beyond the question of size, of course) — in New York there is a friendlier spirit between man & man even in the streets, which extends itself at times too much into a disposition to know each other’s business; while here there is such an utter indifference to everybody else in the faces & the walks of everybody as they plod on their way, that one is not surprised to find it extend even to the cabbies, who never look at you unless you hail them, and who under no circumstances whatever solicit you to ride.

The Theatres, so far as I have seen them here, are much better than they have been reported. I do not find them dirty or dingy inside — though the *entrances* are queer in some instances. But the Adelphi, the old time house of melodrama, where ‘Leah’ had its 300 night run, is every bit as clean, as roomy & as convenient as Wallack’s, while the Gaiety is (I think) more elegant than any house we have. I shall not see the real London favorites for a month or more, as the season does not begin till October. I went to the Alhambra (the Niblo’s Garden I should class it of London) — & saw a very poor comic opera & Ballet spectacle called *Fatinitza* and the *Golden Wreath*. It had been running a hundred nights or more, & the scenery & dresses, though they bore the signs of taste & elegance, were much worn. It was the last night of the piece, and I saw the Prince of Wales in one of the boxes, — a row of dark little rooms extending round the entire first circle. He looks fat and lazy. There is one thing I admire about the theatres here; they know how to charge; in most of them the orchestra stalls are 10/- (\$2.50) and the dress circle 6/- or 5/- (\$1.50 & \$1.25). If you go to book your seat in advance they charge 1/ (25 cts.) extra. I want to see a London First

Night. The opportunity offers Monday coming. Byron makes his first appearance and produces a new play, — at the Haymarket. So I wanted to secure a stall, and I went to the box office of the theatre, and came out again with my stall, but minus \$2.75. I know I shall relish that performance: it has been as expensive as early fruit.

In one of my strolls I passed through a low archway that looked like a carriage entrance to one of the houses on the strand: I found myself in a large court, and beyond one or two narrow passages, some trees: a Church was on the left, a round old stone Church: everything was as quiet as death in here, although the windows of the buildings on either hand denoted occupancy; the change from the din and clatter of the street outside was instantaneous; the few people you met in the place seemed to wear list slippers or go on tip-toe, so noiselessly did they tread. It was well they did — for the flagging one trod underfoot was composed of graveyard tablets, some of brown stone, some white, all stained with age & the seasons' change, and most of the inscriptions worn away. The dead they represent actually lie beneath the passages of this court; — and off in one corner by itself on a stone more prominent than all the others, & railed off from the rest, I read this inscription: 'Here lies Oliver Goldsmith.' It was so unexpected that I was startled for an instant. I could not have been more so had the creator of *Dr. Primrose* stood before me in his own person. I learned that this was the Old Temple grounds, and within a hundred yards further on (outside the Temple limits) I came upon The Old Mitre Tavern site; it is quite modern now; but the scent of the rose hangs round it still."

"Liverpool, September 18, '78.

I went last night to see Irving — who is playing at the Alexandra Theatre here: a roomy and convenient but very dingy (almost dirty) place. I could only get a seat on a back bench, or chair, in the 1st balcony — for crowded houses are the rule whenever the great I. appears. The play was *Louis XI.* — a most repulsive character, as you know, for an actor to

grapple with; and I fear the great I. did not impress me with his treatment of it. In his frenzy — for it appears to be a frenzy with him, — to be realistic or NATURAL — he descends to the farceur's tricks. The peculiarity of his voice, which we have heard so often referred to, consists of sudden and unexpected and sometimes absurd rises and falls — and I can only compare it to a man speaking half of a long sentence while drawing *in* his breath and letting the other half fly out while he expels the breath. One of his stage tricks is very effective but quite unworthy a great artist. He is fond, whenever the scene permits, of shutting down every light — leaving the stage in utter darkness, lit only by the solitary lamp or dull fire which may be in the room; while he has directed from the prompt place or the flies a closely focused calcium — which shines only and solely upon *his* face and head; so that you can only see a lot of spectral figures without expression moving about the scene — and one ghostly lighted face shining out of the darkness; an expressive face to be sure — but after all the entirety of the drama disappears and a conjuror-like exhibition of a sphinx-head wonder takes its place. The enthusiasm was not great — and perhaps this is not one of the great I.'s best parts. I shall not give you an opinion about him till I see him again. So far I've only described him so you may see him as I did.

Monday evening: before leaving London I attended the 'first night' of Byron's new comedy of 'Conscience Money.' *First Act:* three men in love with one woman, — honorable party; sentimental villain; small boy of 18. Honorable man succeeds in getting her; small boy of 18 faints; villain says: 'I will bide me time!' And in the midst of Honorable Man's joy his elder brother supposed to be dead turns up; not to claim the estate, but to draw 'conscience money' (why so called hard to say) from his younger brother. Elder B. very dirty, & can't reveal himself because is under suspicion of murder years ago in Colonies. Honorable Man's agony because he cannot reveal true state of his condition to lovely bride. *Second Act:* Honorable Man taken to gambling & staying from home to conceal his Agony from wife; wife at mercy of villain — who

poisons her mind with suggestions of another woman: Friend of Honorable Man exposes villain; villain exposes to wife & entire company the true state of Honorable Man's finances, the existence of his elder brother, &c. &c. Hon. Man kicks villain out and goes into lodgings with wife. *Third Act:* Hon. Man turns author, small boy of 18 turns up as good friend and reveals news that elder brother is not guilty of murder, but the villain is; brother enters; all happy; & all go back to Fine House. Curtain! Of course like all of Byron's plays the dialogue is witty; and it was very warmly received by the audience. The Theatre was 'The Haymarket,' a good sized place of the old-fashioned kind, with about the finest hearing qualities I have yet found in the London theatres. I met some N. Y. acquaintances between the acts; was introduced to the proprietors of *The Era* & *The Figaro* & received warm invitations to call on them; & am to be put up at the Savage Club."

"London, 41 Jermyn Street.

Sunday, Sept. 22, '78.

Jim arrived quite safe on Thursday.

Friday we gave to lodging-hunting here and yesterday to moving; so that from this spot I date my London lodging experiences to you. Jermyn St. is but a few minutes' stroll from St. James' Park; it leads out of The Haymarket; and is between Piccadilly & Pall Mall, which run parallel with it. It is a 'Lodgings' street, however, and rather quiet. I have the whole of the first or ground floor; a large sitting room & bedroom — the latter being supplied with two beds. The apartments are as cosy as though I had furnished them myself. The walls are absolutely reeking with 'objects of virtue & bigotry' and the 'bric and brats' that encumber the floor give the whole such an air of taste and smell from the antique that when I woke up this morning I really thought I was in a corner of 'Sypher's late Marley's' in New York. In sober earnest, however, the place does wear a homelike air, which is not only for that reason preferable to the bare walls and empty corners of hotel life, but the price is nearer my purse; for we give but £2-2s. a week for the

rooms and 4/ a day for breakfast — the only meal we will take here, as my exploring soul yearns to investigate the dining places of this birthplace of Roast Beef & 'Plum both.' . . .

I went last night to the Folly Theatre: a regular little Japanese glove box. It is about  $\frac{1}{2}$  the size of the old 5th Ave. theatre; holds about 250 in the whole lower floor and 140 or less in the dress circle. The family circle is so low upon the D. C. that a tall man in the latter touches the ceiling with his hat. It is very uniquely decorated à la Japanese; has old china & odds & ends hung on the lobby walls & the passages, and is situated in the heart of the busy city. It was full, of course. First nights here always are — they have not lost their interest even after several years of poor plays, and the audience was quite an elegant one. The plays were poor; the first was an adaptation of 'La Venue,' which you read once — and for which I paid the French authors \$600. It is a most attenuated trifle — but being well played passed off well. The burlesque of the evening in which Lydia Thompson played was the emptiest of empty things. . . . The stars of the night were simply 'local' favorites and not artists. Lionel Brough, the comedian of whom I have been hearing everybody talk for years, was simply a sort of Hardenbergh — only a trifle lighter on his legs, though a trifle more stolid of face.

I called on Friday at the *Era* office — as per invitation, & saw the proprietor & editor. . . .

. . . The deserted streets, the shut shops, the awful quiet which reigns over everything and everybody on the 'holy Sabbath' have smothered in me whatever hilarity may have lurked in my bosom. If these two Sundays in London are samples of all the others I shall hereafter depart out of this blessed town every Saturday night, & devote myself to sight-seeing in the suburbs till Monday comes to revigorate the town. It is a fact that everything is funereal here from midnight Saturday till six P.M. Sunday — when the restaurants open, the taverns throw wide their doors, lights are lit, the crowd emerges from its hiding places, & life begins again."

“41 Jermyn St., London.  
Thursday, Sept. 26, '78.

I have taken some lovely rambles — going one day to Hampton Court: where I thought of the romance you once began in one of our boyish newspapers by that title; and one day I went to Westminster Abbey; and another day to Sydenham to the crystal palace. Do you think if we put up a crystal palace at Riverdale or Yonkers the public of our noble country would make hourly pilgrimages to see it? And make it, long after its ‘World’s Fair’ attractions had disappeared, a profitable concern? No indeed. The Palace is as large I should think as both the Philadelphia Exhibition buildings in one; it is simply a Bowery or Sixth Avenue sort of bazaar now; with stands full of cheap goods to attract the country eye. There are two theatres inside of it, each as large as the Grand Opera House; & a concert room quite as big as Steinway Hall. We saw the ‘Stranger’ bloodlessly murdered in one; and ‘The Hanlons’ perform in the other; besides a cheap circus out on the grounds. There was also an annual fruit & vegetable show going on in which I saw grapes & peaches and potatoes that put the giant fruit of California to the blush. John Turniptops and Molley Barleycorns were everywhere about — & the view of the English countryman on his tour was as good a sight as any I saw.

The visit to Westminster was one of those excursions to one’s grandfather’s grave which it takes two or three weeks to get over. We got in at Afternoon Service time; and the voices of the recitant and of the boy choir sounded through that immense space like the sighs of children in a wilderness. I’m not going to make a guide book of my letter, & so I shall not tell you of all that struck me; except this, that in the chapel devoted to the royal family I noticed away in a corner a diamond-shaped tablet which noted the spot where Charles the Second lay — while above him framed in the wall was a magnificent memorial full of emblematic designs & a full length figure of General Monk. Indeed the finest monuments in the Abbey are not those of the kings and queens of the world —



but of those who ruled in the empire of War, of Science & of Literature.

I shall tell you of Hampton Court another day.

My acquaintance here is beginning to enlarge. I have letters and invitations from Mrs. Wood, Wyndham, and Ledger of the *Era* — & have had calls from Farjeon and Matthison (who used to be in my Company at the original theatre) & who is an author here of some note. All are most cordial, & Wyndham, on whom I called, thinks I ought to stay over here."

Mrs. John Wood, favorite of the English as well as of the American theatres, was heartily glad to meet her former manager and the author of the congenial part *Peachblossom* in "Under the Gaslight," wherein she had often disported. She appropriated the name for her correspondence when she did not use that of the muse which the American critics once bestowed upon her. Being at the seaside when he reached London, she telephoned from Doon House, Westgate, as soon as news of his arrival reached her, and wrote next day in her own familiar way :

My dear Person

"Sept. 24th, Westgate.

Nothing shall prevent my seeing you. I am in an uninhabited Island. Would you like to come here & be taken to Ramsgate, &c.? You leave Victoria Station by Chatham & Dover line at 10:48, arriving here at one o'clock, — two hours, — where you would behold your Peachblossom on the plank. If you don't like this I'll leave here on Thursday and be at Gordon Square by one — where you should have been received *en régal* had I been in town. I leave here for good Oct 8th, and on your return from Paris I place my house at your disposal.

Now my dear fellow, one line or a telegram to say you come here, or I will come to you, and there we are. I am busy here just now with a wary Farmer & a piece of land & tomorrow have some appoint's to keep or I would come. Now hurry up & be here by one tomorrow Wednesday to Your Peachblossom."

“Doon House.

My dear Man

If you should happily arrive by the *one* train & I am not on the plank, the intelligent guard will look out for a long, tall, thin gentleman & hand him this & describe the position of my mansion, of which abode you will please take instant possession, and in about half an hour after if my dogs leave anything of you you will behold some one you may remember.

Yours until we meet and long after,  
M. Wood.”

“No. Ten Adelphi Terrace, London: Sept. 30, '78.

No wonder Garrick lived on this Terrace. I wonder he ever died here — but I believe he did *not* end his days in the house near by which is marked with a slab in honor of his residence.

I think the place will be better than medicine to me. I've felt my spirits rise up to the nineties since I've moved in. I'm in the midst of all the Theatre Clubs: the Savage: the Junior Garrick: & the Green Room: in all of which I have been made an honorary member.

Farjeon thinks it's a splendid place for me. I accepted his invitation yesterday for a visit to Finchley, where he is stopping at the country place of Mr. Burgess — the head of the Moore & Burgess Minstrels; Mr. B. is not a corkist himself, he is simply the manager — who has been so successful in his management that he has not closed his minstrel show (except on Sundays) for fourteen years. He and his wife gave me a hearty English welcome, & I was introduced there to Lionel Brough & his family, who also came to spend the day. Farjeon & Maggie seem to be almost at home there, and all combined to make the day most cheery for me. Brough is one of the best of the London comedians, & quite a popular man among the professionals. He was fifty per cent above the American comedian in every social way. We took a stroll during the day, out into the English fields, through thin green lanes, and among the old oaks & odd old houses. . . . Finchley is but 25 minutes by rail from London, & yet it is a rural Paradise where

everything is peace & calm, and not a murmur or a sign of the mighty city is heard or seen. Mr. & Mrs. Farjeon wanted to be remembered to you most particularly.

I think I told you in my last of a visit I made to see Mrs. Wood: I found her in a Lodge down at *Westgate on Sea* about two miles from Margate; a select & sedate watering place. She is to give me a little party at which I shall meet Frank Marshall & Burnand ('Happy Thoughts') & we think they will work with me to give Lemons & Bonanza *a show*. But even this is *hereafter*; I must wait for their return to town. 'Wait — wait!' is the only advice I hear on any side.

I have found little or nothing worth noting except the exquisite acting of an eccentric artist at the Prince of Wales Theatre, named Cecil (Arthur Cecil) — I have never seen his equal, nor any one to approach him for effective natural acting, on any stage. He and Terry of the Gaiety, — whom I've seen a second time, & whom I find to be a most admirable actor, equally good in burlesque, in singing & in pure comedy, — stand above all of their class.

On Saturday I attended the opening of Drury Lane Theatre, — *Winter's Tale* was given. It is situated in a dirty narrow byway, is dingy & low looking outside. But within — all is different. Spacious rotunda & gallery; broad vestibules; roomy corridors; grand staircases, all stone or marble, and the auditorium extensive in its accommodations. The house was crowded. The applause generous. Indeed *I* find the English audiences much more easily pleased, & really more good natured than our own; at least they will endure a poor performance to the end with a gracefulness which our people never show — for they get up & go out if a thing is dull. *Winter's Tale* was not dull, but it is wearisome at times; and neither the acting nor the spectacle of Saturday night aroused much enthusiasm. The *Autolycus* was the worst I ever saw. Old Ring or Whiting would have been better.

Full houses are the rule here. Byron's new piece has failed & is to be withdrawn, but even that draws fairly. Everything is doing well here — & while the contrary is the story from New

York I think I'm wise in being here idle instead of there growing grey & haggard. . . .

The theatres I've taken in since I last wrote you, are the Canterbury Music Hall over on the Surrey side, & the Grecian Theatre, away up to the northern limit of London. The Music Hall is a very showy but gaudy place; quite as large as the Academy of Music; where I heard a lot of very worn voices singing anything but taking music; except one young woman named Nelly Power who had a very much worn face, but sang exceedingly well & gave a bit of Irish vocalism that would have sent Tony Pastor's audiences wild. I saw our old friend Bartoletti here, and her corsage was lower than ever — & her skirts if anything shorter. The Grecian is a melodramatic temple devoted to the gods who pay 8 cts. to go to the gallery — 25 cents to the balcony — 12 cents to the Pit and 38 cts. to the stalls. I indulged in the luxury of the stalls — and saw an entirely new and original drama entitled 'Sentenced to Death or Paid in his Own Coin!' It is by Mr. Conquest. Mr. Conquest is the manager of the theatre; he is also the proprietor; he is also his own leading actor and comedian. He played on this occasion a villainous old file named 'Hoyley Snayle,' who is comic for two acts with the refrain 'I likes to do good when I can'; then becomes melodramatic in the third act & attempts a murder and puts the crime on another; then emerges into the tragic at the end of the play, and after having a struggle on a church roof with the unjustly accused man, makes a gymnastic leap (at which the gods nearly shook the theatre with delight), and finally dies confessing his guilt, to slow music, and (of course) uttering his almost forgotten refrain, — I—a—likes—a—a—to do—a—ugh—a—good when I — (dies & curtain). He was a good actor of his school — or for any theatre; and indeed the whole company was much better than I hoped to see. Between the plays — there are always two plays equally important at the Grecian — (It was the 'Octoroon' that followed on this occasion, but I did not wait to see it) — the audience or all of it that cares to do so adjourns from the theatre & goes into a large open space or

courtyard, the immense center of which is boarded over for dancing; the place is lit with colored lamps almost innumerable; the band is in a showy balcony by themselves; there are shooting alleys; & promenade walks; bars; refreshment rooms; coffee counters — and all that the humblest heart could crave; including accommodating ladies, ready to waltz or to join you at the bar or the lunch table. The scene was very animating I can assure you: and probably the most novel one I've come across since I've been in London!"

"Adelphi Terrace, London: October 6 '78.

I saw Beaky the other day going to the cabinet meeting in Downing Street. Disraeli looks very old; I've no doubt he *is* old; but he is bent; yellow; and weak. I simply saw him as he stepped from his carriage (quite a plain 'Transfer Company' looking affair) into the official residence of Salisbury; but the sight was a good one — and the little crowd that had assembled there to see him crowded round as though he was the big elephant of the show. It reminded me of a New York crowd watching at a hotel door to see some illustrious stranger, only this was a most respectable-looking well dressed crowd — of ladies & gentlemen. They lifted their hats & waved their handkerchiefs as he passed from carriage to house — but did not cheer.

I have had altogether a busy and delightful week of rambling from Regent's Park to the Isle of Dogs, and I've absorbed the sights of the Thames from Greenwich to Richmond. I went to Greenwich for Whitebait, but found the season was over. Not even my national appeal to the landlord of the Crown & Sceptre that I had come all the way from America to try his Whitebait could procure me even a midget. I had heard that they served them up in 21 different styles at Greenwich, and got up a most gorgeous sort of appetite so as to take in the entire 21 styles — and had to take boiled cod.

I fared somewhat better at Richmond: I had gone up in the train to Kew; had roamed round the squatty little village, and rambled through the old Park and palace walks. I was

hunting for the Star and Garter Inn on Richmond Hill, famous for its Maids of Honor, but my antiquarian soul was smothered in disgust on finding that the original hostelry had been burnt down & in its place had risen one of the finest modern hotels in the country about London. I turned from *that* at once & sought a less pretending Inn over the door of which a sign informed all passers-by that his royal highness the Prince of Wales had honored it with his custom. . . . I took my first taste of them there; and paid for them in the unkindest five hours of dyspepsia I've had since I arrived in England. It was a very old Maid of Honor who served me, and as they were cheap, (a penny each) I ordered half a dozen & ate them all. I want no more. — Do you require to be told that they are an indigestible but fascinating pastry: with a drop of lemon and cocoanut custard in the center?

One day of the week I went to Rochester and Gadshill. Rambled through the ancient castle ruins, with its walls twenty feet thick in places — now the home of a thousand tame pigeons — and groped with the sexton of the old Cathedral Church through the crypt where Edwin Drood was spirited away: and then along rural English lanes I sought the home of Dickens, the hill where Falstaff and Prince Henry larked, and where one can almost fancy Shakespere himself rambled; and satisfied my thirsty throat at the old inn nearby full of Dickens mementos — and where the author of David Copperfield rested himself many a time on his way home."

"Monday, Oct 7th.

My evenings have been all occupied with the plays, but none of them worth a letter. Three failures since I have been here; Byron's comedy at the Haymarket, Farnie's burlesque at the Folly; and a piece at the Gaiety called 'The Lady of Lyons Married & Settled.' Claude is henpecked & in love with Pauline's laundress. Beauséant reveals Claude's perfidy to Pauline, and P. follows C & the washerwoman to his mother's old cottage, where the stuff is stopped by the green curtain coming down.

I was invited to a dinner at the Junior Garrick Club Saturday evening & introduced to quite a number of the old actors & new journalists. Their reception was most cordial, and health & success was drunk to me. I think some good results will grow out of the meetings there — for already I have any number of invitations to examine some of the principal theatres behind the curtain; & everything that brings me nearer the footlights will bring me I believe nearer the public. I was carried off from the dinner by George Conquest, who is one of the richest managers & best actors in England — I wrote you about his theatre. He took me all over it on Saturday — prefacing his kindness by suggesting that he owed me some attention in return for being one of the English robbers who had despoiled me of my railroad scene, and one of the hundreds who had played my *Gaslight*. . . .”

“Adelphi Terrace, Oct. 10th, 1878.

I feel that I have a delicate path to tread among the authors and managers of London; and they are all doing more or less well. It is not here as with us; a play with us is made or damned the first night; in London a first night's failure can be built up by patience & perseverance to run a year; which is better for the actor, the author & the manager than our unfair ‘no redemption policy.’ Still, two produced here — & well received on the opening night — are condemned & withdrawn. One is the burlesque at the Folly, produced by Lydia Thompson, & the other is Byron's comedy at the Haymarket. Clarke is playing the Rivals & will produce in a few weeks *Les Fourchambaults*, which Albery has written up, & in which Mrs. Wood will probably play the principal female part. At Drury Lane Phelps the tragedian is to follow with *Winter's Tale* till Christmas, & then they give the Pantomime. At the Adelphi the Celebrated Case is running to fair houses. At the Criterion Pink Dominoes has passed its 500th night & they look for 250 more. Our Boys was played the 1200th time Saturday last & is booked for the 2000th. ‘Pinafore,’ a clever (satirical) opera comique will probably be played for 3 months longer at the *Comique*, &c. &c. &c.

A dozen plays are ready at each of the dozen successful theatres when their present 'runs' are out — and a dozen native authors stand ready with *more* if these give out.

Wilkie Collins is not in town — but I have written him & I suppose shall hear from him in time: Mrs. Wood promises me an introduction to Charles Reade — though Reade will be of no service to me, as he is stage-struck about his own plays just now.

I have an invitation through Mrs. Wood from Labouchère, a theatrical and literary power here, to visit him at his villa (formerly Alexander Pope's) at Twickenham. I am to go Sunday. Something may lead from this. He is the lessee of one of the *closed* theatres here: The Queen's; the other (the St. James) is owned by Lord Newry — to whom I am also shortly to be introduced — when he gets back from shooting. They are both good theatres — but are considered bad property — perhaps badly managed. Farjeon thinks the Queen's worth *trying*. It is in a fair locality I think — On *Long Acre*, just facing Covent Garden theatre, within one square of Drury Lane, only two or three blocks from the Lyceum. I think I should like to give the London Public a taste of my quality from that standpoint."

"10 Adelphi Terrace, London, Monday, Oct. 14.

Old (English) Probabilities has been prognosticating a storm for this tight little island for a week past, but young Actualities has fought it off — and today and yesterday have been as like our lovely Indian summer as a pair of twins. Most people here say I must have brought the stock of American weather which they have been enjoying ever since my arrival, over in my valise — and let it loose as soon as I got in sight of land. At least so they said at the Savage Club the other day (Saturday) where I was invited to their inaugural dinner of the season. I met the manager of Drury Lane there and have been invited to a sociable dinner some day this week, and afterwards am to be introduced to the stage of Old Drury. I need not tell you we mingled our tears together over remi-



niscences of Shakesperian failure and 'loss' — for his revival of the 'Winter's Tale' is not making him any money. Indeed as I get at the under facts here I find that only the immense sixpenny theatres of the south and east end of London, or the very small comedy theatres — where the stalls are 10/- and the dress circle 8/- and 7/- are really footing up anything on the profit side. I went to the 'Standard' after the dinner Saturday — nearly a two mile drive, at the east end, and found it to be one of the finest theatres in the metropolis. It is fully as large a place as our Academy; has four tiers and an acre of space called the pit. They were playing an English adaptation of the French version of the American Uncle Tom, in which Eva is restored to life and Tom does not die. The inventive Frenchman has also created a mate for Topsy in the character of a fancy darkey named Julius — and the two dance; breakdowns together, and sing comic duets and talk comic trash in a mixture of Cockney Irish and Scotch, which the innocent (or rather guilty) actors imagine is a good imitation of the genuine canebrake lingo. Five of the London theatres are playing 'Uncle Tom' now, but no one place is hurting the other. When I remarked to the manager of the Princess' Theatre the other evening that the opposition must affect him he said that there was no such thing as opposition in London; that each place had its own special attendance; and it seems so.

Yesterday I spent the day and night at the villa of Mr. Henry Labouchère at Twickenham; where I was 'right royally' welcomed and entertained by Mr. L. and his wife — (formerly Henrietta Hodson, a comedy lady here). Mrs. Wood also came down during the day; and what with boating on the Thames, strolling through the grounds, dining, supping and talking, I think I spent one of my most enjoyable days in England, thus far. Labouchère is the editor of *Truth*, & part owner of the *Daily News*, the daily paper Dickens started. He is lessee of The Queen's Theatre, which like the 5th Avenue has had its successes & its failures — & is now closed. And he is a thorough man of the world. He was full and free in

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his information upon every topic most interesting to me, and I think the day most profitably as well as pleasantly spent which I gave to Twickenham. . . . His wife & Mrs. Wood suggested that The Olympic is the place I ought to be 'in' . . . Lord Londesborough, with whom he is intimate, I believe . . . is at the back of the Olympic management. I ought to tell you that the villa is built on the grounds once owned by Pope, and is erected on the very site of Pope's villa. The place was cut up into residential and garden lots many years ago, & this especial portion contains the only remaining relic of the Past — the queer little grotto & arched passage built under the roadway, & which he used to pass through in going from his house to the river which washes the grassy bank ten yards from its entrance. This morning before breakfast & before any of the rest were up I strolled out into the lanes & shaded roads as far as Teddington & Kingston, passing Horace Walpole's magnificent home & park on Strawberry Hill, and coming back along the path by the Thames. But I shall not extend my rhapsodies. What I've written must make you wish to be with me as I — a hundred times every week — do say to myself 'Oh! if Joe were only here!' I wonder if you would tire of the long walks I take. My legs never seem to give out — and I know I shall soon be as familiar with every London locality and many of these memorable suburban spots as the oldest inhabitant.

Before I was suffered to return to town yesterday Mrs. Wood & Mrs. Labouchère took me to see *The Queen's Laundry*. . . . If I had but the pen of a Willis or a Gath what a spicy letter I could have sent 'from our special correspondent' about this royal laundry and the items I picked up there. Damask table cloths worked by hand worth 125 guineas each, and linen sheets finer and softer than gossamer muslin, and pillow coverings in use since 1800 & yet almost as good as new, are but a poor 'showing' of what I stored away in 'me 'ed' for future use. . . .

Business here (I mean commercial houses) have been having a shaky time for a fortnight, ever since the Glasgow Bank

failed for its little £8,000,000 (forty million dollars). I tell you I could see the *blue* in the faces of the anxious and hurrying crowds down Lombard and Broad and Threadneedle Streets; and the very columns of the Royal Exchange shook with the shivers which its members had for a few days."

"Adelphi Terrace, Oct. 18, '78.

I had a pleasant call from Robert Stoepel yesterday and we dined together. He has just left Bijou in Paris at a convent school. . . . Mrs. Bateman gave up the Lyceum Theatre, & Irving has taken it. He is to open it in December with Shaksperian revival, & with a 'star' company. They say he has wealthy backers. Bateman spent his profits . . . & left very little when he died.

The weather is changing here: Fog all day yesterday — & colder breezes today. It is still pleasant for walking, however, and I don't give up my prowlings into the byways & highways for a little thing like fog or cold. . . .

I told you, I believe, that I called on Wilkie Collins, but the interview was short though pleasant. He is not in town for 'good' yet, & when he returns we are to dine & have a long chat. 'There was just a hint that *we* might do a play together.'

"Adelphi Terrace, Monday, Oct. 21, '78.

The London fogs are on their way. We have had two days of them since I wrote you — and queer sorts of days they were: the streets and houses filled with a smoky kind of mist — through which once in a while (say for two or three minutes — two or three times a day) the sun broke, and when it did sent down a drizzle of rain. There is no doubt about the depressing effect of fog, and London fog especially; and yet they say I haven't seen the choicest quality of that article yet; I believe they set in about November, — come in with Guy Fawkes and the Lord Mayor's Day!

Had I seen Stoepel when I wrote you last? I expect to meet several of the London authors with him during the present

week, and Irving especially when he comes to town. Stoepel took me Saturday night to see Coleman, the manager of the Olympic (who represents Lord Londesborough, the real lessee), and I was received most warmly and taken back on the stage to meet Neville, the stage manager & star of the theatre. My reception was extremely cordial, & I spent an hour with Neville in his room — which is most charmingly fitted up. We talked of both countries. . . . He is to take me to the *great* Garrick Club, *the* club founded by Garrick, & the favorite of Dickens & Thackeray. Neville acted very well on Saturday. . . . He will scarcely make a furor with us however in such parts as the *cripple* in *The Two Orphans*. He is more than an actor, though, he is a most excellent artist, & several of his water-color sketches adorn his walls. The theatre was crowded; but crowded theatres here don't mean what they do with us — for the circles are shallow, & there is so much pit & gallery in *all* of them; here for instance was a theatre quite as large as the Union Square, & though full Saturday I was told it footed up only £130, not \$700 — Drury Lane I believe holds but £400 (not \$2000).

Yesterday I took one of my longest walks . . . Stoepel and I footed it together; we went out to Hampstead Heath — the old footpad ground, you know, a lovely country of hill and dale, quite as dangerous now I should think as ever it was by *night*, for there are long stretches of pathway on the hilltop & the hillside unlighted by a single glimmer, and in fog and darkness the road agents ought to have an easy shop there. We came across a gentleman accompanied by two link boys with lighted torches to guide him through the mist & the night — for seven o'clock found us just on our turn homewards, taking the road through Highgate — where we passed Whittington's *stone*.

I saw a charming entertainment here on Saturday; it is given by five or six people in a little hall — and is called Mr. & Mrs. German Reed's *At Home*. Two plays are performed, and between them a monologue by a gentleman named Mr. Corney Grain — who also takes the principal parts in the main piece of the programme. The performance is comedy and

music mixed. The dialogue charming (it is principally by Burmand, who wrote Happy Thoughts) and the songs and duets very catchy. The chief art & the chief charm is in the ability of the actors to play two or more parts in the same piece; thus in the opening play, which is called 'Doubleday's Will', there are seven characters and only four actors. Grain is the best of the lot. He'd be a furor in New York. He is handsome, easy & has a splendid voice. He plays an old man or a young one with equal ease & totally distinct. He would be worth his weight in gold if I got the little theatre back again."

" 10 Adelphi Terrace, Sunday, Oct. 22, '78.

Your news of the New York Theatres is certainly not exhilarating. Business is considered bad here, but then expenses vary here from £45 to £75 per night for the regular season, so that a \$400 house leaves a profit. Drury Lane is less profitable. It is the Booth's Theatre of London; only big things will go there. The Haymarket is another fine property — but it is mismanaged. Besides, they take about a lifetime to prepare a new piece here. 'Fourchambault,' which was to have been ready a week ago, will not be finished till this day week.

There is no one thing being done here which would make any impression in N. Y. The operetta of Pinafore is not big enough for an all night programme, & that is the only piece that would make a go. I think it would be a greater success than *Evangeline*.

I believe thoroughly in the comedy vaudeville style of entertainment; occasionally varied with the old comedy or the modern emotional pieces such as the Gaiety Theatre, the Haymarket, or even the vaudeville give here. But above all the theatre ought to be a little gem of a place. Not an inch larger than the old 5th Ave., & even ten feet ought to be spared from the auditorium of *that* for an elegant drawing-room sort of lobby. Some of the vestibules of the theatres here are parlors. Nothing that I ever did equalled them — so you see luxury pays. For these luxurious places are the ones which are crowded nightly."

“Adelphi Terrace, London, Oct. 29th.

I am led to expect (through Stoepel) a willing and certainly a valuable collaborateur in Wills, who wrote *Olivia*, *Charles 1st*, *Jane Shore*, &c. — & to him I shall suggest *Yorick*, as exactly suited to Irving, with whom Wills is on intimate terms. Wills however is yet in Paris — on his holiday.

There is this one golden thing to say of the English public which goes to theatres: It may take a long time to make your way to their liking, but once get it & it never deserts you — not even in old age.

Sometimes I think it would pay in the end to make up my mind to risk a year of waiting & watching for *my chance* here, for I feel if I once get it I will get a hold soon after.

I have made one or two visits to the Courts (The Criminal Courts) this week; and saw three trials at Old Bailey & two at Westminster Police Court. At the Old Bailey I saw Lord Justice Brett try two serious causes, and in the new Court saw Mr. Justice Hawkins try a sort of robbery case — in which the defence was conspiracy. All the Court rooms were about the size of your ‘Chambers’ — and nothing like so ornamental. A long close railing on one side running the whole length of the wall marks the Judges’ platform, with a long cushioned bench behind it on which they sit. On this platform are six or eight small desks; behind each desk is a cushion to protect the judicial back from the cold wall. The prisoners’ box faces the judges’ stand on the opposite side of the room — the jury is on the right of the judges in a box; & the reporters & special visitors on the left, also in a box. There is a gallery over the prisoners’ box for the public at large. In the court where Lord Brett presided the sword of justice is fixed in an upright position against the wall; and on the bench in front of *it* one of the sheriffs of the City always sits in robes & gold chain — with full court suit underneath; but no wig. The judges of course are wigged — but they do not always remember their dignity, for I saw the Lord Justice tip his wig over his eye as he scratched the back of one ear with his pen. The trials proceed much

the same as with us — only I heard more noisy wrangling between counsel, which was unheeded by the judge, than in our own Courts. Douglas Straight, Digby Seymour and Montague Williams were three of the ablest barristers whom I heard. The first is as pure a light comedian as ever walked the stage. He was engaged in defence of a boy of 17 or 18 who was on trial for the murder of a sweep. The sweep was proven to have been a stalwart, drunken quarrelsome fellow & to have attacked the lad first; the main point of the defence was to ask the jury to decide whether they thought from the evidence that the death of the sweep was caused by a fall or a blow. Straight trod very dangerous ground certainly when he rattled off his argument in light terms; but he succeeded certainly in getting his suggestions endorsed by the judge in his charge to the jury — & the boy was acquitted. One charming feature of the judiciary here — so far as I have been witness — is the most *thorough* review of the *law* first, the *case* next, the *evidence* next — & the counsel's argument last; and the juryman who cannot read his verdict as plain as A.B.C. after any of the charges I have heard so far is a 'Hass'!"

After the first pleasant visit to Pope's Villa came an invitation to luncheon there, and afterwards at Mrs. Wood's:

"Pope's Villa, Twickenham.

My dear old friend

11:15 from Waterloo Station, W. Road by the above train, loop line, will bring you to your Lost Hostess and Peachblossom at five minutes to twelve. A fly, price one shilling, in five minutes will land you at this blissful abode. Next train is after one — too late for lunch.

Yours muchly

Matilda

'Thalia.'

"Oct 17,

23 Gordon Square, W. C.

My dear Man

I have arrived in town for the season; will you come tomorrow, Friday, to luncheon at half past one. Mrs. Labouchère will be here, and then you can say if you will be disengaged for luncheon on Sunday two o'clock with Mrs. Major Rolls, Helen Barry. If you can't come tomorrow send me word so I can write to Helen, and come to me in the evening.

As ever yours

Matilda

"Thalia."



## CHAPTER XIX

Authors' fees to beginners beggarly. Dinner with Olive Logan. The Lord Mayor's show: Guy Fawkes' Day. Comments upon American theatrical prospects. Rumors about Daly and the Surrey or Sadler's Wells theatre have to be contradicted. Charles Reade contrasted with Wilkie Collins. Palgrave Simpson. Authors and profits. Cellar life in London. The Italians of Saffron Hill and the "Thieves' Kitchen." Ballad concerts and Sims Reeves (inaudible). Santley and Mrs. Sterling. Wills, painter and playwright. Thanksgiving dinner. English cook's unfortunate attempt at pumpkin pie. "Lemons" accepted by Wyndham for the Criterion. Robert Emmet's career the theme of a play for Irving. A haughty playwright. Cabbies. Christmas not merry in London streets. Hosts of unemployed. Dinner with Mrs. Wood. A Christmas toast. Boxing Day. New pantomimes. An English audience. Drury Lane. How "Pinafore" was brought to New York. The New Year in London. Agnes Ethel. An opening in London. Supper at the Green Room Club with Henry Irving in the chair. His courtesy. Gooch of the Princess. Trip to Paris with Stoepel. The Channel passage. "Revue" at the Eldorado café. "L'Assommoir." Masked ball at Frascati's. Hélène Stoepel. A visit to Rome. Story to read a comedy. Back in London. Unexpected failure of Chatterton at Drury Lane. Disappointment. Daly turns his thoughts homeward. Proposal to Henry Irving for a visit to America with Miss Ellen Terry. About five years too soon. Irving dares too much in *Claude Melnotte*. Sale of the first Daly library.

"November 4th.

10 Adelphi Terrace, Strand, W.C.

Until you make your way here the prices paid authors is beggarly. 40/- or \$10 is I believe considered handsome remuneration. I will not be able to ride in a gilded coach on any such royalty as that! However, no one *ever* grows rich or great suddenly in this country: everything reaches its

height by natural steps, and by doing so finds a firmer position has been secured in the end.

I was introduced to Captain Shaw the Chief of the Scotland Yard force one day, and I expect to make a visit with him some evening to the cellar haunts of the Great City. This Shaw is the 'Inspector Shaw' with whom Dickens used to make his rounds. I am *surprising* the oldest Londoners in fact by the thoroughness or rather the extensiveness of my investigations here."

"Sunday, Nov. 10, '78.

10 Adelphi Terrace, Strand, W. C.

I met Olive Logan a few days since & we have had a dinner or two together combined with several chats. She thinks I am getting on faster than any American ever did before even to have been received by the managers, and talked with them. . . .

Yesterday being Lord Mayor's Day & the Prince of Wales' birthday was big with festivities indoors & out. The procession of all the old Lord Mayors, & the new one, was a mild affair, but the streets were jammed with people to see it. The banners of the various guilds, and the very theatrical-looking cinderella-like gold coach in which the new Lord Mayor rode were the only 'pretty' things in the show. I invited Mrs. Wood & her daughter, . . . a clever and pretty child, and Labouchère & his wife & Stoepel to see the sight from my window, which is one of the best in London to see such things from. We had a very jolly afternoon; Stoepel played lots of music; little Florence & Mrs. Labouchère made up & performed impromptu charades, & it was almost dark when they went away. In the evening I sauntered through the streets, which were brilliantly illuminated with all sorts of designs in gas work—and mingled with a thoroughly English crowd for some hours. Such *Fun!* Along Regent St. & the Haymarket the crowds were densest; at every dozen steps urchins were selling at a penny each an article they called 'Ladies' Tormentors': a small zinc tube filled with water which spurted at a pressure

of the finger from a small hole in the top! Such Fun! These were bought by the hundred by the bands of fast young fellows who howled & hounded the unfortunates of the other sex along the sidewalks — squirting the fluid from these tormentors into their ears or eyes or down their necks. Such Fun! Then if this liberty was resented by any of the women or their companions they were surrounded by the band, tusselled, hugged, and jeered at to the amusement of fifty or a hundred more who immediately gathered round. Such Fun! Many a poor girl whom honest work or necessitous duty forced into the streets, I saw run screaming across the streets from an attack, to the amusement of the mob. Such Fun! From nine till twelve these scenes went on, and I don't know how much longer, — but I retired from the mob at midnight quite satisfied that none of us know at home what a mob really is.

The worst 'boy' in London, I should judge, after my experiences in the streets & in the Courts so far, is the idle hulking brute of forty, who, after enjoying a malignity of pleasure which nothing but his debased nature and his years combined could invent — comes into court and says 'It was only for a bit of a lark, yer know, yer honor!' So far I have been entirely charmed with the judicial treatment of criminals here. Mercy never seemed so just, nor justice so penetrating as in the temperate decisions which I have heard from the London judges in the Police Courts and at Old Bailey. But mercy does seem misplaced when it lets a devil off with a 5/- fine who 'out of a lark' might have set fire to dwellings & destroyed life. The 'Guys' of the day-time were very amusing. Mostly they were stuffed figures with faces representing either the Pope or Shere Ali, or Guy himself — & were escorted round the streets by bands of little boys, who beat drums, sang a verse to attract attention, & then went round to collect pennies for their show. In the evening they make a bonfire of their guys & of all stray barrels or boards they can seize. In one instance the crowd of urchins, too poor to stuff a figure, had persuaded one of their own number to be their guy, & they had smeared

his face & put a paper hat on his head, mounted him on a chair & paraded him through their quarter, which was up Seven Dials way."

"Monday, Nov. 11, '78. 10 Adelphi Terrace,  
Strand, W.C.

Your news of the hard season rather sets me up in my own conceit of judgment as to how things were going to turn out in theatricals this year.

Had I felt any great confidence I should never have given up the Broadway. But I am sure no money can be made, & no improvement will be noticeable in the American theatres till after January 1st.

I believe that devilish rumor about the Surrey or Sadlers Wells which was originated in New York has shut me out of the confidence of some of the managers here. I could not account for some peculiarities I met with in one or two quarters until within this day or two I learned that the rumor had been extensively copied in England & was generally believed; principally because Mrs. Bateman has not been in London for a month or six weeks & no denial was given.

I have written tonight to the *Era*, & by Saturday I shall have the thing exploded in the clubs & theaters.

The scoundrels did not do me harm enough with their lies when I was at home, but must follow me here. For of course my design was to become acquainted & make friends with all the managers here — & if they supposed I was about to enter the field in rivalry they would none of them be nice to me. . . .

I met Charles Reade at the theatre one night last week. I attended with Mrs. Wood & we called on him in his box between the acts. The play was very trashy and he was very soreheaded & so he was not cordial. I think too he must have been chafing just then under the lash of that letter wh. you send me from the *Post*. At any rate I consider him a very surly old gentleman, or perhaps if I call him an old maid it will be more like, for he left the box for home shortly after I entered, on the plea that he wanted his cup of tea, & was going

home for it. . . . His bearing was decidedly a contrast to dear gentle Wilkie Collins'."

"Friday, Nov. 22, '78.

10 Adelphi Terrace, Strand, W.C.

'Truly did you prophecy, my dear brother, when you said that 'Good luck would come as cometh the brick pile on the head of him that passeth by.'

There is just a chance also that not one brick alone — but many — may fall. I had a call from Wyndham yesterday evening on the subject of *Divorce*. His offer is not a very good one, but still it may lead to better. I had a very cosy chat with Palgrave Simpson on Tuesday last, when I called on him at Kensington. He wrote 'Second Love,' you may remember, a charming comedy acted some years ago by Laura Keene, and was part author of 'All for Her' — which Wallack played. He is 71 years old and looks no more than fifty. From him I learn that Byron only gets £3 a night for 'Our Boys' — and that £4 a night is looked upon as big pay. Andrew Halliday who wrote *Amy Robsart* & lots of successes for Drury Lane only got the pay I'm to receive. The profit here is in the long runs you get out of your plays — and the number of plays you may have running at once. Besides, a failure of one play doesn't kill an author here; the people give him trial after trial in the most generous expectation that he may redeem himself. To return to Wyndham: . . . He offers £2 per night for *Divorce* and we are hem, hemming, on the terms.

Last evening I had a most interesting exploration of the cellar life of London with Inspector Howe from Scotland Yard. I went among the Italians in Saffron Hill and Leather Lane and among the small thieves' lodgings in Fulford's Rents. The former were the most miserable and the most filthy; crowded & foul; a colony of organ grinders and penny ice-cream vendors; and the latter the oddest & most dramatic. The thieves' kitchen in Fulford's Rents (a narrow cul-de-sac leading off Oxford Street) is a scene fit for a play — and if I do *Flash of Lightning* here that will be my location for the Jacob Ladder scene.

The night before I went to St. James Hall to hear one of the English ballad concerts — most fashionably attended — and had the pleasure of seeing Sims Reeves. I heard Santley, Madame Autoinetta Sterling (who was the great favorite & success of the evening) Madame Lemmens Sherrington, & other favorites; but we could do very little more than see Sims Reeves, though he did make a pretence of singing. The pianist played 'My Pretty Jane' & 'Come into the Garding, Maud,' and the well-preserved old chap moved his lips in unison with the notes — but though I sat on the fourth row only, my ears drank in no sound but melodious whispers."

"Adelphi Terrace, Sunday, Dec. 7.

Since I wrote you last I've had an interview with Wills, who wrote Olivia & Charles 1st, & some other good plays. He is painter as well as writer. Equally good in either line. I want to get him to do Yorick with me for Irving — & he is very ready I think to do it. We are to dine first step in all grades of English diplomacy) in a week to go over the matter in detail.

Last night I attended the first night of Albery & Hatton's new drama at the Princess Theatre. It is called 'No. 20; or the Bastile of Calvados.' It is an absurd piece. There was much laughter at the serious points and none whatever at the comic speeches.

Thursday was Thanksgiving day with you, wasn't it? I tried to get up a little one here with the help of Olive Logan, Stoepel & one or two others, but as I had laid great stress on the 'Punkin' Pie of the feast, & the cook hadn't quite got all the points of that dish, I had my pumpkin served up in chunks, stewed in a meat-pie pan without eggs or sweetening — and my feast was a failure. We drank to you all at home. . . ."

"Sunday, Dec. 8, '78.

10 Adelphi Terrace, Strand, W.C.

'Lemons' after all will be my opening play here. It is to be produced on the 28th of December — at the Criterion

Theatre; where 'The Pink Dominos' is now running and nearing its 530th performance; where '*Procès Veauradieux*' was played nearly 200 times, and where 'Saratoga' had a long run under the title of 'Brighton.' Wyndham is the manager & he is to play Jack Penryn. The piece goes into rehearsal Wednesday; I have been busy the last four days going over it to take out certain Americanisms & make some alterations (slight) which Wyndham suggested. Wyndham first offered £200 for it outright; but I have got him to allow me £1 a night every time it is played in or out of London. In the long run -- if the piece has any success at all -- this will be most satisfactory. Perhaps the purity of the play may be its greatest drawback -- for its predecessors have been all 'off color.' And then again in the present outcry here about the immoral French drama, & the Lord Chancellor's refusal to grant licenses, & also out of its simple contrast to the looser plays, 'Lemons' may strike popular fancy."

"Monday, Decr. 16.

At last I have had a taste of 'London Fog' -- and such a fog! The air seems filled with a thick immovable mass like the smoke of a locomotive. You can but dimly see the houses across the street, and nothing a square away is visible -- scarcely even the gas lamps, which have been lighted ever since ten o'clock in the morning. The vapor was so dense at noon that it seemed almost like a rainfall. The house seemed unendurable -- and when I went into the streets they were scarcely navigable. The cabbies lit their lamps, street vendors produced their blazing torches, many passengers carried lanterns & the sight altogether was truly novel. It will seem as though we had a night thirty-six hours long.

Yesterday I was taken by Mrs. Wood for a call on Frank Marshall. I had a very pleasant afternoon. . . . He spoke of collaboration, and by and by we may work together. He seems to be an eccentric party however -- a moth collector in his odd moments, and dramatist by fits & starts. He is at work now on a play for Irving -- on the subject of Robert

Emmet; but managers & authors both are queer fish in this country. The *Criterion* for instance is a specimen. They have played Pink Dominos for 560 nights; and when it comes time to change . . . no play ready. Henderson wanted to try 'Lemons,' & I rehearsed it two days — then found it was badly cast, & would be a certain failure — so I withdrew it (without any quarrel of course!) and this has funk'd them, so they close the theatre on Saturday night."

"Christmas Eve.

I move today or tomorrow from this delightful but rather too expensive place — to No. 9 Vere Street, near Oxford & near Cavendish Square. Round the corner in Holles Street is the house in which Byron was born — & only a little way off is Wilkie Collins' house & Trollope's. I think the place is more home-like & is to cost me  $3\frac{1}{2}$  guineas a week — *i.e.* about \$17.50 for lodging, food, fire & light.

Sunday I had Wills the dramatist to dine with me off a pair of my oysters & a few dozen of duck. The party included Stoepel & Olive Logan & was much fun. Willis *retaliates* & invites me to dine with him at the Garrick next week."

"Christmas, 1878. London.

I was introduced to Gilbert . . . at Drury Lane last night during the Pantomime rehearsal. . . . He is undoubtedly the super-strained essence of conceit now going upon stilts. However, I can spare his acquaintance. I believe he contemplates a visit to N.Y. in March if his 'Gretchen' is a success here. . . .

I could not get a cab to take me to Chatterton's house (some 3 miles off) today where I was to dine — for it was slippery & snowy & they would not go any great distance. You have no idea in fact of the sauciness & independence of the cabmen here on the least show of bad weather, of fog, or at night. They won't stop for you or come at your call unless your appearance suits them — & when one reads column after column in the papers here of the starving thousands patrolling the streets of the interior towns, when 40,000 paupers are fed daily at the



almshouses & 50,000 more at the soup kitchens, I gaze in speechless wonder at the indifference of the London hansom drivers to a 50 cent fare.

No one would know England as the home of King Xmas if he judged it from the sights of London. I fear indeed that the day as a day of jubilee is a myth of the story tellers & the picture papers. At least the London streets were never so deserted even on Sunday as they are this day. Occasionally a few cracked voices droning out a Christmas carol & sounding through the otherwise empty roads recalled the *waits* of which I've read — and a little band of urchins tooting broken horns made the morning *noisy* — but it was far from a lively noise in either case. Not a shop is opened — not a shutter down. Many of the theatres have been closed since Saturday last. All of them are shut today & tonight. Not even a concert is given. In fact if Christmas is kept in London at all it is kept with bolted doors. I have walked through a hundred streets — this night — and not a sound of laughter could I hear through the tight-shut shutters — so if it is kept jollily it must be in jolly little whispers. I suppose the festival is best known as a festival in country parts — but sad country parts are they this Christmas; where hunger and misery make anything but lively figures for a Sir Roger de Coverly — and gaunt starvation would rather gnaw the berries of the mistletoe than waste the bush for arboring Christmas lovers. They tell me — those who know — and the papers are full of the story too, that England has not known such distress for forty years. The Vokes tell me they were playing in Bolton recently & the gangs of unemployed men & women who prowled the streets were becoming a terror. No *carriage* escaped pelting, and people who could afford it were even afraid to ride in a hired hack.

I spent a couple of hours with Mrs. Wood, & had a taste of her plum pudding; & then made a call on Stoepel; & the rest of my Xmas I have spent here. The theatres do not re-open till tomorrow evening (Boxing Day). Last night I made myself a little eggnogg and drank poor old Uncle's toast to the absent hearts."

“9 Vere Street.

Sunday, Dec. 29, '78.

For the past three evenings I have been renewing my ‘childish’ days — and going to the pantomime, at Drury Lane, Covent Garden and the Alhambra — but by all odds the most magnificent and novel was at Covent Garden. It is as interesting and much more novel than anything seen in Humpty Dumpty — always excepting Fox! Alas! they have no such man here; their very cleverest man is only a sort of circus clown who prides himself much more on his ability to do ‘stunts’ than on his comic powers.

I told you how dull on the outside Christmas Day was here! But I ought to say lest I forget it that the day after Christmas, which is called Boxing Day, London (at least) uncovers itself. The shops are still closed, but the streets are full again; matinées are given at most of the theatres; & in the evening all the new pantomimes burst forth upon jammed houses. The weather, which had been cold & snowy, began to thaw that day — & has kept on, till today 'tis as mild as one of our early spring mornings. So nothing kept the people home Boxing Night — and it was a spectacle of itself to see the masses of humanity that poured into every place of amusement in London on that occasion. At ‘the Lane’ (as they call ‘Old Drury’ here) every tier was like an over-yeasted dough overflowing its pan on every side. Whenever the orchestra struck up a familiar music-hall air the boys took it up & yelled out the chorus; while the boxes, crowded with such sights of pretty children, took everything in, both off the stage & on it, with the most intently serious visages, and the old folks furnished all the broad grins of the evening.”

The sudden departure of Mr. James Duff in the early part of December for home, and his reticence concerning the reason for it, were caused by a momentous project which he disclosed to no one until he arrived in New York and broached it to his father. This was nothing less than

the production in America of "H.M.S. Pinafore," which was accomplished in the following January (1879) at the Standard Theatre, with success. The names of Gilbert and Sullivan thereafter became household words on the Western Continent.

"Jan. 2d. '79.

New Year day is no festival here. I tried to recall our New York mode of keeping it by making some calls. . . . I got a letter yesterday from Agnes Ethel asking me if there was any opening for her in London. Here's . . . one discontented with her lot! She as well as others evidently thinks I have accomplished *something* even to have the ears of a manager; but you who know all as well as I do must feel that his ears are nothing without his heart."

"1879, Thursday, Jan. 16.

104 Regent St.

I attended a late supper at the 'Green Room Club' — a sort of off-shoot of the Garrick — presided over by a live Duke (who sends game up from his covers for the table) and of which all the nobby actors from Irving down are members. I told you, I believe, they elected me an honorary member lately. Well, last evening Irving took the chair in the absence of the Duke. Suppers begin at 11:30 P.M. after all theatres are out, so you can imagine what an attendance they can show. Everybody in the theatre world & many of the literary, of the day, were on hand. Young Charles Dickens (he's 40 years old now) and Captain Burton the great African explorer were on Irving's right & left. I had a humble seat on the left, quite near the foot; but I remembered the biblical consolation of how the last shall be first; & as soon as the tables were cleared and the liveliness of the night began Irving sent a messenger to me to ask me to occupy a seat beside him; introduced himself when I came near; and with Dickens on his R and me on his left the rest of the evening was spent. He is very charming and gave a couple of recitations in exquisite table style. By that I mean they were *untheatrical* — which so many of these after-

supper declamations are not apt to be. He took my address & is to make a call & have me come & see him. We parted at 4:30 this morning.

Seated beside me in the earlier part of the evening was Gooch the manager of the Princess' Theatre; who told me that some scoundrel here had offered him a play wh. he had read & in which he saw evidences of a crib from Pique; he had told the party that if it was so he would prefer to do my piece — and in the course of our talk he gave me evidence of this piece being absolutely a stolen copy of my drama. He therefore asked me to send him my play, & I think it is most likely I will be able to do some business with him about it."

"Paris, Maison Bonfoy, Boulevard Montmartre,

Jan. 24, '79.

Here I am in the city of cities — after the beastliest journey I ever made. I left London before the sun was up this morning and reached Paris at seven this evening; and two hours of this time were passed on the Channel; but such a two hours! Nothing that has been written of that 'crossing' gives any idea of the experience. It is the most devilish passage in the world I believe. The two weeks I spent crossing the Atlantic seemed but two minutes in comparison. . . . You will never precisely realize what sea sickness really is, my dear brother, until you take the trip from Dover to Calais.

So you can imagine my inward 'feelinks.' The sea was high and I was drenched. The weather was arctic and I was frozen. Among fifty passengers who made the voyage with me but two retained the smiling visage of the beginning to the end. They were a couple of spry young lovers with cast iron stomachs and feathery consciences. They sat in safety amidships; spooned & forgot the sea; were happy and thought the journey all too short, while the rest of us . . . !

Stoepel who was with me said death had never seemed so sweet or so preferable to him before.

At length we landed. The earth was covered with snow — but never was it so welcome.

I was too miserable to look about me much at Calais; but the sight of my first gendarme somehow or other recalled my youthful spirits — for I thought of Robert Macaire and Humor Hall and Bill Sefton and you, and our early histrionics.

This hotel . . . is in the very heart of the Boulevard, only a few squares from all the theatres & the Grand Opera. Dinner over we took a stroll along the Boulevard to the Rue de l'Opéra where the electric light has replaced gas — and passed all the theatres of the City now open, securing seats at the Ambigu for tomorrow to see 'L'Assommoir.' It was too late to go to any play, but we strolled into 'L'Eldorado,' one of the famous café chantants — where I saw a *Revue*: so clever, though indescribable, as to furnish me with some good ideas for comic business for future use. It is an immense theatre of five tiers, shaped like an octagon — the stage being one of the eight sides. No admission is charged — but the refreshments are priced most exorbitantly; we paid 50 cents for a cup of coffee."

"Paris, Boulevard Montmartre, Jan. 26, '79.

Yesterday was spent in sight seeing; today in play seeing. Only think of it — Sunday is the great *matinée* day in Paris; every theatre gives one; and every place is crowded. I saw 'L'Assommoir' at the Ambigu; 'Les Enfants du Capitaine Grant' at the Porte St. Martin; and 'Le Grand Cassimer' at the Varieties. L'Assommoir is a disgusting piece: One prolonged sigh from first to last over the miseries of the poor; with a dialogue culled from the lowest slang, and tritest claptrap. It gave me no points that I could use; & the only novelty was in the *lavoir* scene where two wash-women (the heroine & her rival) throw pails full of warm water (actually) over each other & stand dripping before the audience. The play at the Porte St. Martin is very good but very long; it lasted five hours. I think it will be a success in America if well done — & I believe Tompkins of Boston has bought it.

Neither the acting nor the scenery so far has *enthused* me. I think *we* have some quite as good at home. . . .

I took in a masked ball last night at Frascati's and saw the can-can on its native floor. A beastlier exhibition cannot be shown anywhere. Argyle Rooms in London was a sort of paradise to that place.

I reserve for other evenings the Français and the Grand Opera and the Gymnase. Business first & pleasure after. My first visits were made to those places which I thought might be suggestive for the work in hand; now I shall go to store up for my future management.

Today Stoepel brought Bijou from the Convent to see me. . . ."

"Rome, Hotel Costauzi, Jan. 31, '79.

Will you believe your eyes when you see the postmark on this letter? Will you believe your senses when you open it & read that your wandering brother is in the Eternal City? After two pressing invitations from our old friend Agnes Ethel (Tracy) which I debated long as to accepting, I finally succumbed to the hearty pressure of Mr. Tracy — who sent me the 'round' ticket with a special note that a room was ready warmed for me — and I left Paris Monday, & after 44 hours of most interesting travel through the south of France, by the Alps & through Turin, Bologna & Florence I reached Rome on Wednesday. In all my life I never received so hearty a welcome; and in all my life I have never been made to feel so entirely at home in a stranger's house as these two kind people have made me here. I have been here now two days — and they have been unceasing in their kindnesses. They have almost tired themselves out in showing me the treasures of the City — & I believe I have seen more of this famous City than any one else ever saw before in two months. I shall not begin tonight to write you of its wonders; nor its mysteries — I am too excited to begin even to catalogue them all — but I shall tell you of everything hereafter. I have tonight been on my usual round of the slums — & such slums! Not London nor Paris can surpass them in smell, in squalor nor in interest. The theatres by day & night have been my study — & the

Churches, from St. Peter's to St. Clements & the Capucin Monastery! — The studios have been thrown open to me, & two receptions by Randolph Rogers & Charles Coleman have been prepared for me. Tomorrow Story is to read me a comedy in his studio — & Monday I leave for London again, where I shall resume work on the play — strengthened & freshened by this dreamy visit which I could not accept for any other season, as my hosts go to Naples the day I leave here."

"Thursday, Feb. 6, 104 Regent St.

The annexed ¶ in this morning's paper will shock you as much as it stuns me for a moment:

'General sympathy will be expressed for Mr. F. B. Chatterton in his new misfortune. It is no secret that the present Drury Lane pantomime was not a financial success, and that the source of profit which has for many years past sufficed to support the losses at Drury Lane during the rest of the year had thus been cut off. Mr. Chatterton proposed to his artists that they should accept half salaries during the rest of the season. These terms were, out of respect and esteem for their old manager, accepted by a majority of the company, but the Vokes Family declined them. As the pantomime could not be performed without the Vokes Family, the house was closed on Tuesday. What will be the ultimate fate of the theatre is at present doubtful; but that Mr. Chatterton will soon again be on his legs, and in the direction of a place of amusement less unfortunate than Drury Lane has been, is considered certain by those who have observed the energy and courage Mr. Chatterton has displayed through life.'

"Saturday, Feb. 8.

Chatterton has just left me. His intention is to put himself into bankruptcy, but he has a prospect in regard to my play which may yet get it before the public at Drury Lane. He is to have an interview with the Committee of Drury Lane (it is owned by a board) in a few days — & he will see if they will run the theatre for him or allow it to be run for him — pending

bankruptcy proceedings; if so he will arrange for the production *there* of the piece on Easter Monday.

If not:— If the theatre is to be closed against him — he proposes that we *share* the expenses of a company to cast it between us; that we offer play & company at either the Adelphi or the Princess' Theatre for 50 per cent of the receipts on condition of the manager giving it a proper get up & advertising; & share the *profits*."

"104 Regent St., Feb'y 18, '79.

At every theatre they are doing a play which is more or less musical — and I am convinced that the coming success with us will be a genuine musical comedy: something less extravagant than Round the Clock, but really a true comedy interspersed with songs, duets, and *choruses*: I shall spend the rest of my time here trying to engage about three clever & pretty women & as many men who can sing & act; and we must open in New York next season with this. I got your letters of the 12th & 19th — with the advice about coming home. I have thought seriously of doing so myself, for the prospects here are most uncertain; everybody being so damnably afraid to touch a new play, or a new author, or a *novelty* of any sort. This is the universal feeling over here — & I'm sure the country will perish of dry rot some day or other."

"104 Regent St., March 14, '79.

I shall sail either in the Baltic on the 18th or in the Britanic on the 27th. I feel decidedly bitter at the thought of having spent so much time fruitlessly; and giving rise to so many hopes which have no result — but I trust that the months I have apparently lost here will not be altogether without some recompense hereafter. . . .

I resolved as far as the new play was concerned not to risk a cent, or spend a farthing of our money on any theatre or manager here. If *they* did not feel safe in going in for the risk — I felt it would be folly for me to trifle away more time or money in urging it.



So I am coming home. Poor as I went. Quite as discouraged. Unless Eno is very free and liberal in his *propositions* I don't think I will *urge him*; nor will I think of any other theatre for the present.

I will probably have the strings in my hand of two or three valuable engagements for a company if Fate is favorable to my resumption of management — and if that is really to be accomplished it will even be easy enough for me now to return here in *July* to secure anything specially needed.

I would not take another new theatre for ten thousand dollars free gift. You know I overcame my old prejudice & 'got into' the 28th St. house — with the result wh. I always said befell the first manager of every new theatre. He is only a catspaw which monkey Time uses to pull the hot nuts out for some favorite."

To sum up Augustin's experience with English theatrical affairs: Mr. Gooch of the Princess Theatre talked with him about "Under the Gaslight" for Easter; Mr. John S. Clarke of the Haymarket asked for "Lemons" to read; Gooch afterwards sent for "A Flash of Lightning." Nothing was eventually accepted. Finally Chatterton offered an opening at Drury Lane for a local melodrama, arranged the terms, three guineas a night, and approved episodes from "A Dark City," "A Flash of Lightning," and "Under the Gaslight," with new London scenes and characters arranged so as to make a new play. Meanwhile, Henderson of the Folly Theatre read "Lemons" and "The Big Bonanza" and accepted "Lemons" for The Criterion Theatre managed by Wyndham. Daly put it in rehearsal there, but after two attempts found the cast inadequate and the performers indifferent, and withdrew it. The Olympic Theatre sent for "Pique," but did not like the story.

Chatterton began the scenery for the new piece at old

Drury — Beanly was the artist — and arranged for Charles Lamb Kenney, son of the author of a famous old farce, "Paul Pry," to introduce Daly to the fraternity of dramatic critics (his acquaintance so far had been with managers), and the author began his explorations of the picturesque side of London for material.

While this was going on, Mr. Gooch sent for "Pique," and Mr. Toole asked for "Lemons" and "Bonanza." Suddenly Chatterton failed and had to surrender Drury Lane, as we have seen, and that closed the only prospect of an opening in London.

The misfortune of Chatterton must have recalled to Augustin his own similar trouble in New York. There were some differences, however. Chatterton went through bankruptcy, and his friends got up a benefit for him. A committee for the latter purpose was organized and met in Drury Lane Theatre with Arthur Sterling as chairman. Augustin was placed on the committee.

The want of appreciation which "Pique" met with from the London managers was a distinct surprise. When Miss Davenport was in England the previous summer, Mapleson wrote to her from Her Majesty's Theatre:

"Dear Miss D,                      Welcome to England.

I have told my man to send you a nice box for Wednesday.

Why can't we do 'Pique' at Her Majesty's? A most brilliant chance if *well* mounted as it was done at the 5th Avenue, & a fortune to be made.

Ever yours  
J. H. Mapleson.

They don't know how to mount a piece over here."

When news of Chatterton's trouble reached Rome, Mrs. Tracy wrote immediately:

"Rome, Feb. 14th, 1879.

My dear Mr. Daly

Your letter telling of Chatterton's failure found Mr. & Mrs. Vedder and a gentleman friend at dinner with us. I asked to be excused while I read it — and when I told them the bad news I wish you could have heard all our exclamations of regret at what cannot fail to be a great disappointment to you. I can't tell you how much we both wish you could have known about it and remained with us a few weeks. It is too bad that you have lost this chance in London, but perhaps another and a better one may turn up for you — and after all it may be far better under the present circumstances that you did not produce your play at Drury Lane. Let us hope it is for the best. No doubt something is waiting for you at home — where everybody is sure to welcome you! With regard to me — we are just at this moment trying to decide what is wisest for us to do! Stay in Europe or return to America. If I go home Frank has no objection in the world to my acting — but I don't like to urge him to return on my account or to gratify my ambition possibly at the expense of his health. When I know how he has decided I will let you know, then if you care to let me appear under your management I shall only be too glad to do so. I am sure we shall not disagree on the subject of terms. . . . Harkins offered to play me after two hundred dollars a night and give me one full benefit. If we should be able to arrange what would you like me to do? I have nothing except 'Agnes.' Would you like to do some of your own pieces? I shall be in Paris in the spring and if there should be anything new suitable for me will be on the look out. . . .

Mr. Tracy sends warmest and enthusiastic regards — and I am always sincerely

Yours

Agnes E. Tracy."

Augustin mentions his plans for engagements to be made in London in anticipation of an opening in New York; he sought Miss Neilson with that object. Miss Neilson did not play under his management when he was

reëstablished in New York. In fact her history after this time was a brief one. Her last appearance in America was in July, 1880, and the next month she died in Paris.

Henry Paulton, one of the prime favorites of the English comic stage, was another acquisition Augustin had in mind, but Paulton desired to be introduced as a star on the first visit, for, as he wrote, "I don't want to waste America."

Among the earliest, if not the first, of the proposals to Henry Irving for a tour of the United States was one from Mr. Daly made at this time (March 14, 1879) before he left London. He offered Irving a three months' engagement and half of the gross receipts, guaranteeing \$500 for each performance, Irving to play 5 nights and a matinée each week. If Miss Ellen Terry could be induced to accompany him, she would receive \$500 per week for seven performances, and select her own distinct play for Saturday nights. The company was to be furnished by Mr. Daly and to include a leading English actor to support both Irving and Miss Terry. But it was not for five years—or until 1883—that Irving thought the time propitious for the American experiment, and then he brought his own company and scenery. His début at the Star Theatre (formerly Wallack's) at Thirteenth Street and Broadway will be recalled by many playgoers. It met with the success which my brother anticipated at the early date of which we have been speaking. Everything Irving did in his first days was accepted, and he dared everything. He announced "The Lady of Lyons" at the Lyceum in 1879—Mrs. Wood wrote of it:

"Irving is simply ludicrous as Claude. Terry looks too lovely—but it is not Pauline."

While Augustin was abroad trying to acquire an opening, his library was disposed of at home. It was sold at public auction, at Leavitt's in Clinton Hall, Astor Place (the site of the old Opera House), commencing Monday, October 14, 1878. Curiously enough our old school-mate John H. V. Arnold sold his library at auction in the same year. His collection contained a great number of theatrical biographies, but was especially notable for its volumes of celebrated and criminal trials, perhaps the most complete in the country. Arnold told me he had to dispose of his books because they took up too much room. If I remember rightly, his catalogue comprised over three thousand lots. I think that, like many other "collectors," having enjoyed the pleasure of accumulating, he longed for the excitement of "dispersing."

The sale of the Daly books continued for five nights, and was reported by Miss Jeannette Gilder and other representatives of the press, day by day, in a very competent and appreciative manner. There were 1037 titles, besides eighty which belonged to Bouton, the bookseller, who catalogued the sale. The total for the 1037 reached \$9969.63, which, after deductions for auction expenses, netted something under \$8500. The auctioneers and Bouton thought the sale very successful, although Bouton conceded that the books did not bring as much as Mr. Daly had paid for them at private sale — largely to Bouton himself. The collection comprised many works extra illustrated by former owners as well as by Daly. Most were of the kind dear to lovers of the theatre.

The most-talked-of item in the catalogue was Mr. Daly's copy of Knight's Pictorial Shakespeare, extended to forty-four volumes by the insertion of 3700 plates. There were also Peter Cunningham's "Nell Gwynne"; letters of the comedian J. P. Harley, addressed to George

Daniell, containing matter of interest in the drama generally; the "Attic Miscellany"; and Brough and Cruikshank's "Falstaff," extra illustrated. The volume most cherished by Daly was his own illustrated copy of the "Holland Memorial," — a sketch of the life of George Holland, the veteran comedian, with dramatic reminiscences and anecdotes, Morrell, 1871, Royal 4to, of which only fifty copies were printed. It was extended to two thick volumes, imperial quarto, with upwards of two hundred plates of celebrated actors and actresses, Holland's contemporaries, many original drawings (one by Tom Worth, of Holland, as Dickens' *Fat Boy* in "Pickwick," and another of Holland as *Paul Pry*), together with the original manuscript account of the "Holland Fund." There were Chambers' "Book of Days," extended to twelve volumes (one for each month), an absolutely unique collection, labelled "Human Longevity"; obituaries of many singular persons of both sexes; a collection of fifty years from old newspapers, gazettes, magazines, and scarce books, bound up in five volumes, imp. 8vo., and dated London 1825-75.

Bouton tried to protect some of the "extra illustrated" books relating to the stage by putting an "upset price" upon them and causing them to be bought in for account of Mr. Daly; but all of them, except the Records of the New York Stage, were subsequently worked off in other sales, public or private. Little was left of the proceeds of the sale after repaying Bouton his advances, made to keep the theatre going in its last season.

## CHAPTER XX

Return from England. At work upon "L'Assommoir." Engagement of Ada Rehan. Frank W. Sanger. Mrs. Harry Watkins. A fine production of "L'Assommoir," but no public for the prohibition drama. Looking for a theatre; the present site of Daly's is selected. Efforts to bring Irving to America fruitless. Efforts to take Booth to London now fail. Correspondence. Account of Booth's early visit to England. Mrs. Sykes writes about the Terry sisters. An echo of the days of the Melville Troupe. Harry Seymour settled with at last. Making over an old theatre into a new one. How to bring the auditorium down one story. Daly's gift for reconstruction. Charles Fechter disapproves unavailingly. The company engaged. Beginning of a world-famous organization. Their modest salaries, particularly Miss Rehan's and Drew's. Fisher acquiesces. Parkes is horrified, LeClercq resigned, Davidge completely subdued. Georgiana Drew (Mrs. Barrymore). Otis Skinner. Catherine Lewis unknown. Mr. Daly's terms the ruling rates. Miss May Fielding recommended by Miss Ethel. Full list of the company and salaries. Expenses of the new establishment. Youth, talent, ambition, and trust. What Mrs. Gilbert and Mr. Lewis (now with Abbey) say.

DALY returned from England considerably poorer than when he went there, except for the knowledge of warm English hospitality and the useful experience of the London theatres and managers. He brought back with him the play "L'Assommoir," which he had seen in Paris and disliked; but Charles Warner had made a great hit in London in the delirium tremens scene as described by Zola, and Mr. John Duff remitted two hundred pounds to bring the play over. He advised Daly to produce it at the Olympic Theatre. Of this venture, in a now out-of-the-way playhouse, whose popularity had departed, it would be unnecessary to record more than its failure,

except that the engagements for the production brought to Mr. Daly's notice the young girl who was later to become a queen of comedy. Mr. Gardner, manager of Mrs. John Drew's Philadelphia theatre, was employed to collect a suitable company for "L'Assommoir," and among his other recommendations came this one:

"New York, April 11, 1879.

My dear Mr. Daly,

Miss Ada Rehan who will play with Miss Davenport at the Grand next week is a tall beautiful girl and splendid actress. I would advise you to see her by all means."

Miss Rehan was playing *Mary Standish* to Miss Fanny Davenport's *Mabel Renfrew* in Daly's "Pique," and showed intelligence and adaptability, aided by a "velvet voice," as Mr. Depew in after years described it. She was engaged for the small part of *Virginia* and afterwards given *Clemence* in the brief run of "L'Assommoir."

The version produced at the Olympic was the French dramatization of Zola's novel done over into English by Mrs. Olive Logan Sykes, who, in fact, negotiated the purchase with the play-broker Mayer.

Among the other actors engaged for "L'Assommoir" were the young Frank W. Sanger, afterwards to become a noted theatrical and operatic manager, Harry Meredith, Frank Drew, and Mrs. Harry Watkins, formerly Mrs. Charles Howard, and earlier, Rosina Shaw, one of three talented sisters, favorites in concert and in drama since 1839. She had been a leading lady for years in England as well as in America, and now, nearing her sixtieth year, proved her vivacity by assuming an urchin part.

With every aid from a competent company, adequate equipment and experienced stage direction, "L'Assommoir"



— as the play was called — failed to receive the favor bestowed upon it in London. The New York public was not to be attracted by such moral dramas as “The Drunkard” and “The Bottle,” which had for many years disputed with “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” the favor of rural audiences. The lack of interest was perceived on the first night. After three weeks the play was withdrawn. This was a greater disappointment to Mr. Duff than to Mr. Daly, who had had little faith in melodramas of low life after the failure of “The Dark City.” With undiminished confidence in his son-in-law, Mr. Duff now encouraged the renewal of his efforts for a permanent footing, and it was found that the Broadway Theatre (near Thirtieth Street) was in the market.

A moment may be spared to recall a further effort to bring Henry Irving and Miss Ellen Terry to America. Mrs. Olive Logan Sykes, on Daly’s behalf, enlisted Mr. McHenry, the banker, and Sir Henry Wikoff in this attempt, and had several interviews with Irving, who told her of splendid offers of the same kind from Max Strakosch, Wallack, and Boucicault. She gathered that only Wallack’s had so far been considered; but Irving told her that he liked Mr. Daly and thought him a sincere man. In the course of this talk he broached the scheme of having Edwin Booth play in the Lyceum in London, while he (Irving) played in America, and stated that Booth had written him a long letter about it. He said he admired Booth’s acting and was sure he could please “if his pieces were properly done.” He purposed that Miss Terry should remain in London to support Booth, and that her sisters Marion and Florence should come to America with him. In Mrs. Sykes’ opinion, Mr. Daly’s offer to deposit \$10,000 as security for the tour influenced Mr. Irving, who, as she expressed it, meant to deal with

Mr. Daly "fair and square" as to sharing terms, so that Mr. Daly should not bear all the risk.

Upon receipt of this information, Daly wrote at once to Booth, proposing the season at the Lyceum, and received the following:

"68 Madison Ave.

June 4th, 1879.

Augn. Daly Esqr.

Dear Sir

Mr. Irving is fully acquainted with my views on the subject to which you refer, and I am surprised that he should entertain or express a hope that I should visit England without communicating with me directly. I have not yet 'screwed my resolution to the sticking place' concerning a professional visit to England, consequently am not prepared to negotiate.

Truly yours,  
Edwin Booth."

The curttness of this response made my brother wonder if it were caused by any personal grievance connected with himself, and he immediately inquired of Booth, who responded in a way to dispel his apprehension, even if it did throw a shadow across the Atlantic:

"June 6th, 1879.

Augustin Daly Esq.

Dear Sir

I cannot conceive why you should suppose me to be influenced against you by some "secret offense" — such is not the case, therefore rid your mind at once of that annoyance — if it be one. The *cause* of my 'surprise' at Mr. Irving's conduct concerns none but our two selves, and, for the present, it must remain a mystery!

Truly yours,  
Edwin Booth."

Booth had visited England as early as 1864, opening at the Haymarket what proved to be an unsuccessful

season. He played *Shylock*, *Sir Giles Overreach*, and *Richelieu*, and only in the latter part did he extract anything like warm praise from the press. A brief tour in the provinces carried him to Manchester, where he found Irving in the stock company that supported him. Irving played *Cassio* to his *Othello*, *Laertes* to his *Hamlet*, and *Bassanio* to his *Shylock*. Irving's admiration of Booth's acting doubtless dated from that time; his own rise was rapid from the time that he was "discovered" by Bateman and became the chief attraction of the Lyceum in London.

The unappreciative reception which Booth found in 1861 doubtless caused him for many years to look with no particular favor upon a second journey abroad, and it was not until 1880, the year following his writing of the above letters, that he reappeared in London. This was not at the Lyceum, but at the Princess, under Gooch. His engagement lasted a hundred nights, beginning with *Hamlet*, which was coldly received (this was one of Irving's parts) and followed by *Richelieu*, which again proved most popular. The next year whatever remained of the "mystery" was evidently happily dissipated, for he and Irving played together at the Lyceum in "Othello," Irving assuming *Iago* and Ellen Terry *Desdemona*.

With reference to Irving's suggestion about an engagement for Miss Terry's sisters, it will be interesting to hear of the impression they made upon Mrs. Sykes, who had theatrical experience, was herself gifted with a fine stage presence, and was an excellent judge of that qualification in others :

"May 19.

Miss Marion Terry & her mother called on me the other day. She is very sweet & gentle — almost as much so as Ellen. She is engaged for the Prince of Wales' until a year from next July. Mrs. Terry informed me that she is to get almost the figure you

offered her . . . & all costumes found. . . . The next day she wrote me that their ideas for America were far, far beyond £40 a week . . . Florence is disengaged but they would not let her go out alone. In regard to Ellen there is no use approaching her yet. She is bound to Irving & indeed it is his fixed intention to leave her here when he goes, as he wants pieces done for her & believes she would draw in them."

"July 10, '79.

I have written Helen Stewart to call on me. Mrs. Terry with Marion & Florence called on me yesterday. The girls made a tremendous sensation in the hotel — they are lovely. I am to see Ellen whenever I like, but her mother tells me she don't want to go to America. Mrs. T. says the salary you offer Florence is only £2 a week in advance of what Neville gave her. She says (& others have told me the same) that the established rule with English artists is not to go to America for less than 3 times what they get here, else there is no profit. . . . I am pegging away at 'Newport' and will work in your ideas."

There was another proposition for an American tour which may be briefly referred to. It came from my brother's early friend Mrs. Bateman, and concerned the bringing over of her daughter Isabel and Charles Warner in Wills' play, "Charles I," which had been a very successful English production, and in which Miss Bateman created the part of *Henrietta Maria*.

My brother's own plays continued attractive. While Miss Davenport had a virtual monopoly of the society dramas, Louis James, now starring, wanted "Monsieur Alphonse," and the old favorite "Under the Gaslight" was acquired by Gus Phillips, whose *forte* was "Dutch" dialect parts, and who played the one-armed soldier, *Snorkey*, as a German-American veteran.

If the reader remembers the boyish adventure of the "Melville Troupe," twenty-three years before this,

he will not have forgotten the loyal way in which Harry Seymour, the costumer, without the shadow of a prospect of remuneration for his services, opened his trunks and robed the boys and girls for their performances. It is good to read this extract from a letter of his :

“Seymour’s Costume Dépôt, 62  
East 12th Street. The largest  
collection of Costumes, Arms,  
Banners and Paraphernalia for  
Theatres, Circuses, Balls and  
Tableaux in America.  
New York, May 13, 1879.

Augustin Daly Esqr

Dear Sir

Mrs. S. unites with me in rendering to you our heartfelt thanks for the generous assistance rendered to us on the 15th ult. That assistance saved us from being put in the street, and believe me if there is any way or means in our power by which we can more than by thanks gratefully express our appreciation command us and we will prove it. . . .

Believe me ever yours to command

Harry J. Seymour.”

I remember Seymour well, and my brother and I often laughed over the episode of the “Melville Troupe,” recalling poor Harry’s blank face when confronted with an empty exchequer; and how he nevertheless gallantly helped out the desperate youthful venture; but such was my brother’s reticence in those things that until I came upon this letter after his death, I never knew that he had found a means of returning that long-past kindness. And I like to think that out of the mist of those golden days there was evolved from time to time some other figure who came to Augustin and recalled his or her share in the wonderful performance; that even the German band

were ultimately paid according to their magnanimity; and certainly that the good girls, who read up in "Macbeth" and "Poor Pillicoddy" and "Toodles" until they were dead letter perfect, were not forgotten.

But to return to the bustling days of 1879 and the making of "Daly's Theatre." Not the least attraction of this property was that it was so run down and antiquated that it could be had for the very low rental of \$14,000 for the first year and \$16,000 for the next — an important consideration, as the alterations my brother designed would cost at least \$18,000. The first step was to obliterate every reminder of the old "museum" days, among whose later attractions was a huge stone image called the "Cardiff Giant," which had been dug up years before on a farm in the upper part of the State and exhibited as the petrified remains of a prehistoric man. A humorous controversy was started at the time in the press concerning its authenticity. There was no doubt that it had been dug up at the place specified, — affidavits of the fact being plentiful, — but there was much curiosity as to the date of its interment. The publicity warranted Banvard in bringing the huge figure to New York and placing it in this museum among the antiquities on the first floor.

The old theatre had an entrance on Broadway, fifty feet long, terminating in a steep stairway of some nineteen steps which led to the auditorium. The auditorium itself, constructed on a plan almost as antique as the Cardiff Giant, contained a high stage with two proscenium boxes perched over the footlights. Upon this discouraging situation the constructive mind of Mr. Daly brooded but a short time, and then, with the aid of Mr. S. D. Hatch, the architect, contrived the most surprising changes. The auditorium was practically brought down to the ground floor by the simple expedient of distributing the

nineteen steps along the whole length of the fifty foot passage. Four steps were placed at the street, seven between the box office and the main doors, four led up to the ticket-taker's rail, and four more to the auditorium. The entrance was widened and tiled, and the extensive foyer carpeted, furnished, and ornamented with mantels, mirrors, and paintings.

The stage was lowered considerably; a new proscenium arch was erected to frame the stage pictures; three private boxes on each side were built, and new ceilings erected. The theatre as it exists to-day presents, after thirty-six years, the design of Mr. Daly, with his decorations and embellishments added from season to season. Augustin dearly loved to exercise his gift for reconstruction — mechanical as well as literary; but a letter of Charles Fechter voiced the general doubt as to his wisdom in transforming the old house:

"I can't agree with you on the beautiful situation of the Broadway theatre nor can I agree with you on the tearing down of the place and remodeling back and front.

There is to my mind very little to do in the shape of main changes. Decoration is the only want, and working of stage.

You can master in both; and maybe I can efficiently help in the 'carry-out' of your thoughts and improvements. But — for God's sake (and your own) don't begin with real extravagant expenses — but *make believe* they are accomplished.

The masses will know no better and give you the same credit as if you foolishly ruined yours, before even opening your doors."

As in the opening of the Fifth Avenue Theatre ten years before, the manager now surrounded himself mostly with young ambition. There were new policies to be pursued for which new and plastic talent was required. The two members of the Daly company destined to be linked indissolubly together in the memories of the longest and

brightest day of his management were content to begin with moderate salaries for the sake of being attached to that management:

"June 29th, 1879.

My dear Mr. Daly

In accordance with your desire that I should state my terms, may I hope that forty dollars (\$40) per week will not seem an 'iniquitous' demand. I have, I feel, improved in one point at least since our former connection, & that is in my manner of speaking, which, as you are aware, frequently rendered what I had to say in a degree unintelligible by reason of bad enunciation and rapidity. This, I think, I have 'reformed altogether' by almost an entire season in a semi-serious part which demanded slowness & distinct utterance.

Hoping to hear from you when you have given the above your consideration I remain

Yours very sincerely  
John Drew."

"324 West 33rd. St.

My dear Mr. Daly

I beg to say that I will accept your offer of thirty *or* thirty-five dollars per week for next season. Hoping sincerely that it may be in your power — as I am sure it is your inclination — to make it the latter,

I remain  
Very sincerely  
John Drew."

"Long Branch, June 26th/79.

Augustin Daly Esq.

Dear Sir

Having heard that you propose to manage the Broadway Theatre the coming season I would like to negotiate for a position with you to play the juvenile & light comedy, or in fact such parts as I may be suited for. I have several good offers for next season, some to travel, others for permanent positions,



but I want to remain (if possible) in the City and I would like very much to play under your management, if agreeable to you. My salary will be reasonable. I have a very handsome & abundant wardrobe, & am constantly adding to it. If you think you (can) entertain my application I would be pleased to hear from you, soon as possible, even if you cannot make definite arrangements. Let me have your views, that I may know how to decide about other offers. Trusting to get a reply as early as convenient

I am yours truly  
Ada Rehan."

"Dear Sir

I am in receipt of your favor. I am willing to risk engaging with you, with no stipulated time, trusting you will do what is right in casting me for such parts as you deem advisable. I will make my salary \$40 per week, and that is the very lowest I can entertain. I have several advantageous offers, and two, *I give you my word of honor*, are for \$50. Thus you perceive I am trying to meet your views as to salary. Will you kindly let me know your reply as I have to give the Chestnut in Phila. an answer, as they are waiting & I must decide soon. I may say that I will dress everything as elaborately as will be consistent with the character. Hoping to hear from you, I am

Yours sincerely  
Ada Rehan.

P.S. Will you please say when you expect your season to commence."

"Dear Sir:

I write to formally close the engagement with you for the season of '79 & '80. I accept your offer of \$35 per week with the understanding that you will increase it as you promised should I be worth more to you — which I sincerely trust will be the case. What I am most anxious for is to play good business, as I am refusing a positive leading position & higher salary to accept the engagement with you. However I will leave the matter of bus.

entirely in your hands feeling confident you will do what is just. Let me hear if this is understood satisfactorily.

Yours very truly

Ada Rehan.

Byron Cottage, Atlanticville, Long Branch, July 9th '79."

Charles Fisher wrote :

"N.Y. June 24th, 1879.

74 West 53d St.

Dear Sir

I will take \$100 per week. I cannot take less, and I am confident there is not at any first-class theatre in the City an actor holding my position with so small salary. I mean men like Gilbert, Stoddart, Parselle & Beckett &c. These gentlemen get from twenty five to fifty per cent more than I ask, and are sometimes out of the bills till they grumble, an arrangement with which I should not be so discontented. I think this proves I have considered the change in times and prices. I remain

Dear Sir

Yours respectfully

Charles Fisher."

George Parkes, who had lately been starring, wrote in reply to the question what salary he expected, —

"Of course the most I can get, and as you are the Napoleon of managers as regards salaries, placing them upon a footing that others had to compete with, I think I am safe in trusting to your decision."

Mr. Daly seems to have rewarded this confidence of Parkes by an offer which elicited the following :

"July 3d.

Shades of Cesar *Napoleon*, never! — Well, hardly ever. Star in Dundreary one season and offered \$35 the next! 'Après moi le déluge!' After my expenses both private & public I have

no doubt *I might* borrow enough to eke out the season — but should I die — there's the rub. *I will descend* from Mont Blanc (the height I had placed the salary) to \$40, and could not meet my expenses and debts under, though I have no doubt many *can* afford to do so.

Yours in melancholia

G. Parkes."

Charles Leclercq, as accomplished a character artist as ever lived, was content with \$50. Davidge, one of the sterling actors of his day, who bore one of the kindest of hearts and possessed a wealth of professional learning, wrote :

"Give me \$60. You know I am worth a great deal more than the sum you name, and believe me

Yours sincerely

Wm. Davidge."

And he was persuaded to take \$50. Mollenhauer (E. R.), one of the best conductors of his day, furnished an orchestra of sixteen pieces, including three soloists, and his own services as conductor, for \$280 per week. James Roberts, scenic artist, one of the daintiest brushes of any theatre, was content with \$60.

Of those who wished to enroll with Mr. Daly were the charming Georgie Drew, wife of Maurice Barrymore, and Otis Skinner, then at the outset of his career. It is part of the history of those youthful days that he was willing to accept terms identical with those of Mr. Drew and Miss Rehan.

Among the comparatively unknown names on the first programme of the new house was that of Catherine Lewis. As the season progressed and she was fitted with parts up to her capacity for acting as well as singing, the press declared that she furnished another instance of

Mr. Daly's genius for discovering unsuspected talent. She was engaged primarily for singing parts in the musical programme with which he intended to vary his entertainments. She was not altogether a beginner, but she was beginning with Mr. Daly, and her last letter and his ultimatum are characteristic :

"July 15, '79.

137 Henry St. New York.

Dear Mr. Daly

I will accept your offer of \$45 per week as Prima Donna for the season 79-80 at your Theatre in New York — you to furnish me with all costumes complete.

Sincerely yours

Catherine Lewis."

Mr. Daly's reply is drafted at the foot of the last communication and is notable for his resolution to eliminate the "star" feature from his company :

"I accept the terms & the costumes: leave out the Prima Donna phraseology: substitute 'for chief singing business' or anything else of that kind."

A very charming person, Miss May Fielding, wholly new to the stage, was recommended to Mr. Daly by Mrs. Agnes Ethel Tracy.

A number of young people with good voices were added. The full list included Harry Lacy, Hart Conway, Frank Bennett, E. P. Wilkes, and Messrs. Iredale, Edwards, Sterling, Hunting, Morton, Brien, Watson, Solomon, Murphy, Edgar Smith, Walsh, Burnham, Lawrence, and Newborough; Mrs. Poole, and the Misses Helen Blythe, Margaret Lanner, Maggie Harrold, Regina Dace, Mabel Jordan, Annie Wakeman, Estelle Clayton, May Bowers, Georgiana Flag, Isabel Everson, Nellie Howard, Lillie

Vinton, Emma Hinckley, Sydney Nelson, Sara Lascelles, Maggie Barnes, Laura Thorpe, Emma Wharton, Emma Hamilton, Lillie Stewart, A. Lovell, Fanny McNeil, Grace Logan, Ella Remetze, and Dora Knowlton, who, long after, put her experiences into a book called "A Daly Débutante."

It is pleasant to know that Mrs. Clara Fisher Maeder applied for a position as delineator of "comedy and character old woman." She was born in 1811, was at first a "child star," and after growing up played *Ophelia* to Charles Kemble's *Hamlet*. And it is interesting, too, to find "Yankee Locke" (so named from his "down east" dialect parts) soliciting the place of "chief comedian in the new corps dramatique." As *Maitresse de ballet*, Miss Malvina was engaged, a capable artist and sterling woman.

Some pecuniary details are not unwelcome, especially when they serve for contrast with present conditions, and show with what seamanship the still youthful manager prepared himself for all weathers. The weekly salaries for seventeen ladies and fourteen gentlemen were \$1077, and for twenty-three chorus, \$248; the mechanics' or stage hands' wages were \$236; the scenic artist's, \$60; the ushers', doorkeepers', &c., \$88; the gas bill, \$80; and advertising in sixteen papers, \$300. From this it will be seen that the new management was not to be ruined by extravagance. The figures strike us to-day as marvellous. They show what the people of the stage were willing to do for Mr. Daly and for art; and that they knew that his economies put no money in his own pocket at the expense of others.

The absence of Mrs. Gilbert and Mr. Lewis from the ranks this first season causes one so much regret that I cannot forbear anticipating a little and giving this extract

from a letter Mrs. Tracy wrote to Augustin the same autumn from Buffalo :

“I saw Mrs. Gilbert and Mr. Lewis this A.M. They played here one week in ‘Engaged’ to fair business. They both said they would like to be with you again. We talked about old 5th Avenue days.”

FIFTH PERIOD: 1879-1883





## CHAPTER XXI

Opening of Daly's Theatre, September 18, 1879. "Love's Young Dream" and "Newport." Miss Rehan's début in a small singing part. The quest for plays. Death of John Brougham. Death of "Count Joannes." His last letter. "Divorce." "Wives," by Bronson Howard, from Molière. "An Arabian Night." "Man and Wife." Mrs. Gilbert drops in on Daly. James Lewis returns. Oakey Hall and the prohibition drama. "Oofy Gooft." "The Fellers Wot Be's Around." Owen Gormley, the back-door keeper. Patrick McCarthy, night watchman. Richard Redding, colored factotum. Business managers. Mr. John Farrington. Mr. John A. Duff. "The Royal Middy." "The Way We Live." End of the season. General Sherman.

WHEN the doors were opened on the night of September 18, 1879, the spectators deemed the transformation of the old Broadway Theatre a miracle of ingenuity and taste. The entertainment was a comedietta in one act called "Love's Young Dream," in which Miss Rehan and Miss Fielding appeared with Fisher, Parkes, Lacy, and Wilkes. This was followed by a comedy in three acts, "Newport," by Mrs. Olive Logan Sykes, in which Miss Lewis appeared with Davidge, Leclercq, Drew, Conway, and the whole company of débutantes.

All the young people sang. In the first piece Miss Rehan had a duet with Miss Fielding, and Miss Fielding a duet with Lacy, and a *romanza*. In the second piece the chorus had several numbers, and Miss Lewis and Hart Conway a musical programme of considerable length. The entertainment, a blending of the dramatic and lyrical, was not voted a success. What the audience

carried away that first night was the memory of a host of bright young people, eager to please and full of promise.

Many plays were submitted to Daly's consideration at this time. Julian Magnus and H. C. Bunner (editor of *Puck*) offered a vaudeville composed by themselves, for which they proposed to have music set by Tissington. Sara Stevens, who played *Hero* to the elder Wallack's *Benedick* in 1857, and old women with Lester Wallack in 1878, wished Mr. Daly to give matinées of a play by John Brougham, "Lenore." Her letter was written but a short time before Brougham's death. That most amiable and talented of actors, who had for nearly forty years been a public favorite, quitted the stage this year and died in June, 1880. An annuity, purchased with \$10,000, the proceeds of a benefit given for him, was enjoyed but two years before his death. Bronson Howard had left with Daly, long before, an adaptation of two comedies of Molière ("L'Ecole des Femmes" and "L'Ecole des Maris") which he called "Wives."

The present shadow of failure was of course lightened by gleams of humor, some of which were furnished by a grave epistle from the Count Joannes delicately suggesting an attractive programme — "Richard III," in which he said he had played at the Lyceum to \$1188, "while another personage played the same character on the same evening, and only a few streets distant, to a beggarly \$420." The letter omitted the fact that the Count's great house was composed of an uproarious crowd assembled to ridicule his performance. This was probably among the last letters the poor "Count" ever penned, for shortly after he died in his room in a small hotel on Sixth Avenue. He preserved his fiery spirit to the last, as well as his polished manners. One of his latest ex-

ploits was a celebration of the centennial of Paul Jones, which he said made him "troops of friends."

"Divorce" was presented on October 1, and was so well received that it was played altogether twenty-three times. Miss Davenport's rôle, *Lu Ten Eyck*, was first assigned to Miss Mabel Jordan (daughter of the well-known Emily Thorne and of George Jordan, once the rival of Lester Wallack), but on second thoughts was given to one of the most modest members of the new company — Miss Ada Rehan — who carried it with a buoyancy that brought the revival an unexpected measure of success. While it was running, Bronson Howard's "Wives" was rapidly prepared, and on October 18 was produced with immediate success. Had it been presented as the opening bill, it would have made a difference in the fortunes of the season. Musical numbers were introduced for Miss Lewis, and a fascinating chorus of Musketeers. Howard wrote from London :

"My dear Daly,

I have been through a variety of feelings during the last few weeks which I can now laugh at — and perhaps I owe you an apology for some of them, now that you have brought 'Wives' to a triumphant result. When I first read your announcement I tore what little hair I have and wished I had had warning to revise the piece after 5 years' added experience. When I saw the fuller programme I pranced around under the impression that you were doing up the piece in some *modern* shape; and where under the sun the '20 young ladies' could come in for a chorus (?) puzzled and troubled me. I am glad I did not meet you just then on a dark night in a side street. Then I saw no mention of Molière in the advertisement, and I needed all my Christian training to respect the catechism. At last I saw an announcement with Molière in, and saying the scene was in the time of Louis XIV. I calmed down a little. Then the full

announcement of the last day made me still more serene. I received the press notices yesterday, and of course I am now complacently rejoicing in the evident success. I am very glad that you credited Mr. Williams with the songs and choruses, for, while I dare say they are good for the popular effect I am pleased not to be responsible for them, as I might meet Molière's ghost walking through a churchyard some night and he'd get the best of me. Accept my thanks for the manner in which you must have put the piece on.

Sincerely yours

Bronson Howard."

"Wives" was played forty-eight times, and then replaced by one of those comedies adapted from the German which afterwards became identified with Daly's Theatre. This was Von Moser's "Haroun al Raschid," produced December 1, 1879, under the name of "An Arabian Night, or Haroun al Raschid and his Mother-in-law." It was greatly enjoyed, and played seventy-six times.

The company meanwhile was kept in training for more important work by the revival of "Man and Wife" for matinées with Miss Blythe as *Anne*, Miss Jordan as *Blanche*, Mrs. Poole as *Hester Dethridge*, Morton as *Geoffrey*, Drew as *Arnold*, and Leclercq as *Sir Patrick*. As in the case of "Divorce," the only representative of the original cast was Davidge, who repeated his inimitable *Bishopriggs*.

In December our old friend Mrs. Gilbert, on her way through New York with Abbey's company, called to see her former manager. It was a great meeting and outpouring of souls, and the result appears in the following letter:

"January 10', 1880.

My dear Mr. Daly

It is perfectly understood on my part that I am engaged with you for your next season of 1880 and 1881 at seventy dollars

per week and I can assure you the thought of being with you again gives me a great deal of pleasure.

Yours very sincerely,  
Mrs. G. H. Gilbert."

From the time that "Grandma" had her interview, she resolved (and she told Mr. Daly so) that James Lewis should return to the fold. Her determination resulted in his engagement for the next season.

A matinée was given by Mr. Daly in aid of the Seventh Regiment fund for furnishing its new armory on Park Avenue, which was now, December, 1879, opened with a fair, to which everybody contributed with the greatest good will. The thanks of the Board of Managers was conveyed to Mr. Daly by Colonel Emmons Clark.

In the face of the late failure of "L'Assommoir," the enthusiastic Oakey Hall, now engaged on *The World*, wrote to Mr. Daly twice that he "could not resist the feeling that a moral domestic drama, based on the vices of drunkenness and gambling, would be a go if produced during the Lenten season to touch the society people already stirred by the 'moderate drinking' movement." The manager, suffering from his late experience, found it quite easy himself to resist that feeling.

Louis James wrote from Indiana for a strong emotional play for Miss Marie Wainwright and himself. James, as we know, was the original *Yorick*, and surpassed in force and pathos Barrett, who undertook the part later. With serious appreciation of his calling he could have gone far, but he was fatally lacking in that quality; and we know that dramatic art rewards only earnest votaries. Another correspondent of that time was the distressed but undaunted adventurer "Oofy Gooft" (Gus Phillips), who was constantly struggling with the royalties of

"Under the Gaslight." At various times he wrote: "I send on to-day per express one hundred dollars in hard money — hard to get, hard to keep, and hard to part with. Yours for sure." "I am broke but smiling." "Will try and make you happy as soon as possible. Business very tart. Yours regretfully!" "Had to borrow money to get out of town. Am obliged to inquire of my friends the time of day. Oofy."

I may properly mention here "The Fellers Wot Be's Around," a supposed coterie of quaint and appreciative habitués of the upper gallery, who, since 1855, had been patrons of the famous New York theatres, had continued their attendance through the old Burton and Wallack days to those of both Fifth Avenues, and had now followed the fortunes of Daly to his new home. These modest visitors never revealed their identity to the manager, but after important productions usually wrote him a friendly review, nothing extenuating, however, which he never failed to show me. It was written on an elaborate sheet of note-paper with a filet border of red and blue lines, a monogram at the top, and colored triangular spaces in the upper corners with the legend, "1855-1879; Compliments of the fellers wot be's around. Memorandum." They did not hesitate to make known their wants, too, as appears by a communication *à propos* of a scarcity of programmes on the first night of "Wives":

"To persons attending a theatrical performance for instruction or amusement, two things occur to us as being essential: A good play and — a 'Bill of the Play.' The first of these you provided on Saturday night, the latter you did not. To us who are old 'rounders' and familiar with the voice, gait and peculiarities of most of the actors and actresses on the American Stage, a bill is not indispensable to enable us to recognize the performers, except at your theatres, where you have provided so many new

faces this season. But then, we keep a file of all 'Bills of the Play' — We were unable to procure one on the first night of 'Wives.' Therefore, knowing how obliging you have been to us in the past, we make bold to tax your generosity once more, and request that you will kindly furnish us with a copy if possible — Of course we shall see 'Wives' again, and then we can get a 'Bill' — but it will not be a 'first night' one.

Trusting you will pardon our temerity,  
we are still

'The Fellers Wot Be's Around.'

To Augustin Daly

New York, Oct. 20, 1879."

It was in this season that a certain official, who had been celebrated by no less a person than Mark Twain, first loomed portentously upon all who approached the stage door of Daly's. This was the redoubtable "Owen," whose last name almost nobody but the manager and the treasurer knew. Mr. Gormley was an Irishman of enormous strength and peaceable habits, formerly stage doorkeeper in A. T. Stewart's old theatre where "Under the Gaslight" and "Griffith Gaunt" were played; he applied to Mr. Daly for a place as soon as he heard of the new venture. Owen could take an ordinary man under each arm and walk off with them. It is related of him that once at Stewart's old theatre, when it became necessary to move a long "box sign" which spanned the wide sidewalk from the building to the curb, and four men staggered under the weight of one end of it, Owen picked up and carried the other end with the greatest ease. He had a weakness, of course (as what strong man has not?), and possessed quite a collection of documents certifying in due form that he had "taken the pledge." For twenty years almost every dramatist worthy of the name knew Owen. He was uniformly courteous, but

his incredulity with regard to alleged appointments with Mr. Daly grew to be a painful idiosyncrasy. He suspected cards and took no messages. It got to be so that Mr. Daly himself lived in anxiety for fear of forgetting to notify Owen of expected callers. Howard Paul wound up a business letter to Mr. Daly with this flattering reference to Owen :

"English stage-doorkeepers are the devil to deal with, but I think your man captures the cake — if not the card."

Apropos of the maze that had to be traversed from the stage entrance to reach the manager's office, the experience of a correspondent of the *Detroit Post* is related by himself :

"Inquiring for Daly, they said he was in his office. I got a guide and started for it, for though I had been there before nobody should be so foolhardy as to try to find Augustin Daly's office without a robust and intelligent guide, and, if possible, he should also have an alpenstock and a St. Bernard dog. We started about 7.30. It is harder than it is to find the editor of *Puck*, and is somewhat like going under the Hudson River in the tunnel. We went around the block, entered a harmless-looking door, threaded an alley, entered another door, stepped over a tremendous dog, went through a little closet with seven people in it, entered a hall at the other end of which were illuminated folding doors, exited here and sprang up a flight of steps to a landing, down more steps, past 13 dressing rooms, past some theatre flies, over some books on the floor, under something about three feet high that looked like the mast of a ship fallen down, through a sort of trap door at the left into a dark room. 'You had better go slow here,' remarked the guide. 'Wait till I step and open the door.' I presently followed a gleam through a sort of work-shop, where I fell over a saw-horse. In another stairway I saw some Chinese lanterns and suits of armor. . We went through six more rooms and up some



stairs, and I was just regretting that I hadn't brought my lunch with me when the guide knocked on a door and we were admitted by Mr. Daly himself. I know now what makes his plots so intricate. But what bothers me when I think of the labyrinth is that I don't remember crossing the street anywhere."

Not less devoted than Owen, and altogether exemplary through all the years, was "Patrick" (McCarthy), the prince of night watchmen. He it was who came to my brother at the Grand Opera House for a job, and remained ever after, to be one of his most esteemed friends and aids, and one of the faithful, like "Owen," remembered in Augustin's will. But the "character" of the establishment was undoubtedly "Richard" (Redding), certainly a descendant of some grand vizier, chancellor, or diplomat of the Congo, whose duties were the handling of stage furniture and bric-a-brac, errands, sweeping and cleaning; and on festive occasions, neatly got up, he acted as butler in the Woffington room. His *forte* was correspondence, and although discouraged by Mr. Daly would continue to inflict it upon his "good boss." The subjects of his epistles ranged from an application for an advance of \$5 because he had "a tuf wife to deal with" and required the money "before he could go out on the road," to numerous misunderstandings with his fellow employees (white) whose dictation he resented, and family concerns of the highest importance, which called at one time for the desperate expedient described in the following letter:

"Mr. Daly.

I would like you to let me off for about an hour. I want to go and secure a room for myself as I intend to Live alone the balance of my days. It comes to this after my working over twenty two years to make my family comfortable at one time I had 10 children now there is only two Left & they are

both Girls & growe up but of no use to me Whatever. I have clear proff to show where the fault is but will omit it at present, I wish to be able in their absence to bid good buy to the traitors tomorrow night in this way I want 3 passes to give them to come & see the show tomorrow night then I only want one hour to go home & get my trunk & a few things all on the quiet. this I must do sure without delay & I ask for \$3.00 to help me out of this bad fix that a villain has got me in.

Your most obediant

servant

Richard."

Richard ultimately, many years after, died in the bosom of his family.

It was in this season that Mr. Daly attached to his fortunes Mr. John Farrington, who, after serving in this theatre for many years, was taken to London and remained as business manager in Daly's Theatre there, until his death in 1912. James Tait oversaw the mechanical part of the stage and John Moore was stage manager. Mr. Fred Williams, an expert writer of lyrics, assisted in the musical features which were now to be identified with this establishment.

The presiding genius of the front of the house was, of course, Mr. John A. Duff, whose portly and commanding figure presided over the foyer, welcomed the members of the press, and discouraged with a stony look applicants for free admissions. A dapper person once cheekily approached the rail over which Mr. Duff was leaning according to custom, and said he supposed that "professionals" were welcome. "What kind of professionals?" queried Mr. Duff. "This kind," said the cheeky individual, and leaping from the step, he turned a magnificent back somersault into the lobby, and then without waiting to see the effect vanished into the street!

Mr. Duff's happiness was to see an eager stream of people passing through the gate. When only a thin stream trickled through, to a play doomed to failure, he always repeated with conviction, "They'll come yet!"

After the long run of "An Arabian Night," "The Royal Middy" was produced on January 29, 1880. This was an adaptation of Richard Genée's comic opera, the "See-Kadett," which had had an immense success in Germany. Miss Lewis was *Fanchette* the Zingara, who, assuming the disguise of a royal midshipman, led as brilliant a band of marine boy-warriors as were ever marshalled on the quarter-deck of a theatre. Eighty-six performances were given of this comedy-opera.

On Saturday night, May 10, Mr. Daly produced his adaptation from the German of L'Arronge, "Die Wohlthätige Frauen," to which he gave the name "The Way We Live." In it Mr. Drew and Miss Rehan were cast for the first time in comedy parts of the kind they afterwards made famous. It was a satire upon those society ladies who engage in charitable enterprises for worldly reasons, to the neglect of private duties — not a very novel theme, but easily adaptable to any modern community. "The Way We Live" was played twenty-one times, and the season closed on May 31 with "The Royal Middy" for the matinée and "An Arabian Night" in the evening; the company — divided into two parts, dramatic and musical — departing for a tour through the principal cities while the theatre was let to the Salsbury Troubadours with their pretty interlude "The Brook."

During this season of seven months and a half, the new theatre had but one failure (the opening bill) and three unquestioned successes. With an established theatre such an experience would have resulted in a handsome balance at the banker's after paying all expenses, including the

costly Louis XIV costuming of "Wives," and the gorgeous seventeenth century mounting of "The Royal Middy." But the new *Daly's* was not an established theatre; it was a struggling beginner, and so the pecuniary balance of the season was on the wrong side. My brother's anxieties, of course, were very great; but his eyes must have opened wide when he was now offered thirty thousand dollars for the balance of his lease! The offer came through the lessor's agent, Mr. Dexter. It was declined.

An exceptionally hot summer affected the tour of the company and of all travelling entertainments. Of Boston, he writes that the circus and baby elephant gave the musical company its quietus in the last week. In Chicago the manager met his friend General Sherman, just in from his headquarters at Washington, who wrote:

"Dear Daly

Am just in. Will take great pleasure in seeing your new play *Arabian Night* — and, better still, your own dear self. I am just starting out, but will fill the box at 8 or shortly after."

## CHAPTER XXII

The Season of 1880-1881. "Tiote" a failure. Reasons assigned for Daly's want of success. "Our First Families." "Needles and Pins" the first hit of the season. "Zanina" and the Nautch girls. Digby Bell. "Cinderella at School" a favorite in spite of the musical critics. A débutante's expenses. Salaries doubled. End of the season. "All the Rage." "Old Women of the Stage." Green Room rules. Play pirate ejected from the theatre. Books left over from the sale of 1878, disposed of.

A MELODRAMA, "Tiote," the scene laid in Wales, and introducing a romantic gypsy element, opened the next season on August 15, 1880. At least five new engagements were made for it, notably Miss Fanny Morant, Miss Emily Rigl, and Miss Virginia Brooks, a graduate of the Brooklyn Amaranth Society. Miss Rehan was *Isopel* the gypsy, and Mr. Drew the wandering *Jack Ferrers*. Some reminiscence of George Borrow and the fleeting vision of his heroine of the dingle may be discerned here. Notwithstanding brilliant acting and scenery and novel comedy touches, and the cordial and appreciative notices of the press, the play succumbed to hot weather and that undefinable something that will so often baffle theatrical hopes. One writer, unable to understand this failure, suddenly discovered that it was due to Mr. Daly's managerial autocracy and the public dislike of Cæsars and Napoleons, as instanced by the recent defeat of General Grant at the nominating convention in Chicago. Daly, it was alleged, conducted his theatres to suit himself, as if his motto were not "We study to please," but "I do as I please." But a very patent reason for the falling

off of patronage might have been discovered in the absence of sprightly little Miss Catherine Lewis, who after her successive successes in "An Arabian Night," "Wives," and "The Royal Middy," turned into a star and took her attractive personality to a theatre down the street. Mrs. Gilbert and James Lewis made their *début* in "Our First Families," by Edgar Fawcett. Fawcett's comedy ran for nearly six weeks, and was followed by "Needles and Pins," in which Miss Rehan, Mr. Drew, Mrs. Gilbert, and Mr. Lewis were first recognized as the famous quartet which for so many seasons endeared Daly's Theatre to the public. The play was an adaptation of Rosen's "Starke Mitteln" or "Strong Measures," and made the first distinct hit of the season, its run of a hundred nights being suspended only because Mr. Daly was under contract to introduce in a new opera a remarkable novelty, a troupe of Nautch dancers from India. They were brought over by Mr. Harry W. French (author of "Art and Artists"); not without difficulty, however, as he had to obtain government permission. The troupe and their attendants were finally gathered together and sent by water to Southampton, where they took the North German Lloyd for New York. Mr. French wrote to Mr. Daly, impressing the necessity of having arrangements made for their comfort upon their arrival, in order to gain "a strong hold upon their hearts, for they are like so many three year old babies." There were magicians in the troupe who were accompanied by their cobras, and French wrote of the latter:

"One of them is a little seedy and his charmer is very low-spirited, but we have hopes, as he still takes his regular rations. The rest are enjoying the voyage as heartily as possible under the circumstances, smuggled in a bag, which is smuggled in a box. I hope some Custom-house officer will put his hand

in there. I think he will pass the rest of the chests. . . . I have made up the enclosed memo. of the sort of accommodations the Hindoos will require. The most important thing is steady heat. There should be three rooms, or a large room with three apartments, one for the women to sleep in, one for the men to sleep in, and one for both to eat, cook and sit in. They will want simple cot beds in a row and plenty of blankets, and some sort of cheap blankets or mats to sit on. In the large room give them a large, old-fashioned Franklin stove with three large bricks to arrange on the hearth instead of andirons, to cook; and plenty of rice and curry powder and vegetables and flour. Most of them will eat mutton too, but *never* pork or beef. They must never come in contact with either in any shape or form. They drink tea, coffee, water, and are particularly fond of milk. They want a few porcelain-lined pots and a few spoons for cooking, but simply plates and cups, as they eat with their fingers. Another very essential thing is a large sink of some sort in each bedroom into which they can get and spatter themselves all over with water every day."

Mr. Daly hired an entire upper floor of Bangs' restaurant, a building directly opposite the theatre, and fitted it up for their use. They were delighted with it and with the opportunity to sit at the windows and look out on Broadway. On the evening of January 18, 1881, they appeared for the first time before an American audience in an opera by Genée, adapted and produced under the title of "Zanina, or the Rover of Cambaye," in which Miss Joyce, Miss Rehan, Miss Fielding, Lewis, Digby Bell, and John Brant appeared. Genée's music was of a high order. There were remarkable scenic effects, one being a tropical tornado.

This was the first appearance of Digby Bell with Mr. Daly, and his fine voice and natural comic powers were immediately appreciated. James Lewis had a congenial burlesque part, and he and Bell made the uproarious fun

of the third act in the startling disguises required by the plot.

The snake-charmers were introduced in the first scene, a public square, handling their deadly pets and attended by an alert mongoose, which darted here and there, ready to pounce upon any refractory or evasive reptile and bring it to subjection. The magicians appeared in the second scene, an Indian bungalow, and after knife-throwing and other feats, gave the famous Indian basket trick. A little lad, about twelve years old and perhaps five feet high, stepped into a round basket eighteen inches in diameter and less than a foot in height, and stooped over until his hands touched his feet. A shawl was then thrown over him, and this shawl was seen gradually to subside as if the boy were gradually melting into the basket. Upon the shawl being withdrawn, only the basket was visible; and its cover being replaced, one of the men took a long sword and passed it several times through the side of the basket until the point showed on the opposite side. Then the shawl was again spread over the basket, was violently agitated, and then thrown aside by the boy, who stood up smiling before the spectators.

The entrance of the Nautch dancers was now announced by music — a Hindoo orchestra seated in the rear. As to the dance, there was no exhibition of agility, and no pretence of figure about it. To the monotonous thrumming and twanging of the native musicians went on the unvarying shuffle, shuffle, shuffle of the bare feet, the graceful swaying of the body, and waving of the jewelled arms. The girls were comely (except the one with the nose ring, which was fastened to one nostril), and their eyes were humid, lustrous, and full of curiosity. The ebony lady of the group was the only one that smiled and seemed to enjoy the novel experience.



It happened that the winter of 1880-1881, the greater part of which the Nautch girls spent in America, was one of uncommon cold that set in early and lasted long, and was very trying to the young women. They did not stir out before their *début* except to the theatre, when they sat on the floor of one of the private boxes, hidden by the gilded lattice front, through which they peered at the young girls dancing in the ballet in "Needles and Pins" (a charming measure); they were fascinated by the vigor, swiftness, and grace of the Americans. They said to Mr. Daly through their interpreter, "We can do nothing like that."

After the *début*, my brother's wife and mine entertained the visitors at our homes. The demeanor of the Hindu women could not be surpassed for refinement, ease, and naturalness. Their bearing was that of persons accustomed to society, and the grace of their movements was conspicuous in response to every little attention. Their intelligence was such that without the aid of language our ladies appeared to be able to carry on an animated interchange of ideas with them. They remained in America until the end of the run of "Zanina" (a month), when they returned to their native country — all but one, who succumbed to the hardness of the winter, and died in this country.

On March 5, 1881, "Cinderella at School" was produced. Mr. Woolson Morse came to Daly with the manuscript of a musical play suggested by Robertson's "School," which, in turn, had been taken from the German. Morse was without musical education, but carried in his head a number of pretty tunes. Mollenhauer, the leader of the orchestra, put the composer's ideas into form and did the harmonizing and orchestrating.

The bright young women of the company who were

working hard to deserve promotion knew that the manager could always be reached by a straightforward letter. Here is the budget of a *débutante* when the question of engagements for the next season came up :

"My dear Mr. Daly

Your good opinion makes me very happy. I feel quite safe in trusting my art future with you. . . . I hate to talk about money, detestable stuff! but I must. I have managed to scramble through this season with the aid of what I saved from last; that fund is now pretty much exhausted & I am living entirely on my salary. I will give you a fair estimate of my living expenses :

Board and room	\$10.
Laundress	1.50
Car fare	.90
Lunch during rehearsal	2.
Escort home at night	1.50
Toilet articles	<u>1.</u>
	\$16.90 total

Allow a fair margin for proper clothing, dentistry, travelling expenses and board during summer's rest and you will have my lowest terms, of which I am gladly willing to give you the benefit.

Sincerely \_\_\_\_\_"

Like most of the young *débutantes*, the writer had begun at \$15 and was now getting \$20. It ought of course to be noted that all the original salaries had been increased, and those of the young principals like Miss Rehan and Mr. Drew were doubled. The elders, too, who had made such concessions at the beginning, had to be satisfied. Looking back upon this period, it is delightful to know that, through all his distresses and disappointments, my brother gave affectionate care to all who were

dependent upon him not only for the daily wage, but for what was infinitely more precious, thoughtfulness and consideration :

“September 28” 1880.

Dear Governor

Just a line to thank you for all your kindness and care of me during our Tour, and when I say I thank you I mean all and more than that word implies.

I know I was a nuisance many times and felt it keenly, but I tried not to bore you any more than I could help.

Yours sincerely  
Grandma.”

The writer, Mrs. Gilbert, was one of the more effective of the persons in “Cinderella,” and as *Miss Zenobia Tropics*, head mistress of the “Papyrus Seminary for Young Ladies,” marshalled her fun-loving scholars not only with Amazonian firmness, but with a terpsichorean grace which had no equal. As for Lewis, he was a figure that might have stepped out of Rowlandson’s eccentric drawings.

Poor Morse’s attempt at musical composition was hammered dreadfully by the musical critics of the great dailies, and that kept many people away, but the play as a play was such a good piece of fun, carried off with such a wealth of beauty, youth, and spirit, that it was presented no less than sixty-five times; not to large houses, nor even full ones; but the manager was resolved to give it the whole remainder of the regular season.

The season closed on April 30, 1881, and the house was given over to W. D. Eaton’s comedy, “All the Rage.”

A letter from Lawrence Hutton this season says that he is delighted to think that Mr. Daly contemplates seriously a book on the “Old Women” (of the stage) — an “Old Women” series to be got up in size and shape

somewhat after the style of the "English Men of Letters," and that he hopes they are really to have the benefit of Mr. Daly's pen. The manager's pen just then was employed on several tasks; one, a letter to a brother manager detected in tempting one of the company to leave, suggesting that he give notice in advance what particular performer he covets, and receive authoritative information of the individual's pay, so that the professional market may not be unduly and unnecessarily inflated. Another letter was to Mr. Elbridge T. Gerry, President of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, expressing the opinion that a proposed statute which interfered with the discretion exercised by that Society, in regard to permitting the appearance of children on the stage, was not called for; the Society being entirely competent to deal with every case. Another composition was a notice posted in the Green Room explaining that the manager was compelled with regret to add a new fine to those already incorporated in the rules of the theatre, "for unwarrantably loud laughter, singing, or talking in the dressing rooms," and adding that "quiet admonitions, gentle warnings, and kind words go unheeded." Doubtless, when the light-hearted débutantes gathered at night, their interchange of ideas became too audible. I believe that no addition to the treasury was effected by this new measure, and nobody resigned. Still another employment for Mr. Daly's pen was a letter to the papers in reply to criticism of his right to eject from the theatre a person found surreptitiously taking notes of the music of "The Royal Middy." The ushers deprived the culprit of the notes he had taken, returned him the price of his ticket, and showed him the door. He threatened a suit for damages, but as the manager acted within his rights, nothing came of the incident but newspaper articles.

Mr. A. Oakey Hall, who was then writing for the press, took up the managerial defence and quoted the legal authorities to sustain it.

During the summer some of the costly books which were bid in at the sale of 1878 were offered again at auction by Leavitt & Co. and were better appreciated. Thus "Ireland's Forgeries," for which \$45 had been bid, now brought \$155 — still a ridiculously low price; and the 44 volume Shakespeare brought \$748 in place of \$572.

## CHAPTER XXIII

Third Season. New faces. "Quits." Miss Agnes Leonard. "Americans Abroad." "The Youth of Louis XIV." "Odette." Miss Rehan's first important part. Hélène Stoezel. "La Girouette." New aspirants. Lillian Russell. William Collier recommended. Plays. Musical drama by Mrs. Parnell. Daly in Uhrig's Cave, St. Louis. His opinion of that city; police mysteries. The author of "Dixie" in his old age. Benefit for Daniel Emmet. Journalistic appreciation of Daly's work. The season of 1882-1883. Long effort attaining its reward. "Mankind" — a Cockney melodrama. "The Squire." Miss Rehan's *Kate Verity*. Lewis' *Gunnion* a marvel. Miss Virginia Dreher's début. "Our English Friend." Lewis balks at the principal character being given him; Drew demurs to its being taken away from him. Daly arranges all that. Lewis' ill and omens. Anniversary of Daly's first play, "Leah the Forsaken," December 8, 1862. First production of old comedy in this theatre — "She Would and She Would Not." *Hypolita* fits Miss Rehan at all points. Drew's *Don Philip* capital. Production of the latest Parisian sensation, "Serge Panine." Admirable acting of Drew. The story does not elicit sympathy. At last the popular success arrives — "Seven-Twenty-Eight" catches the town. Tour in the West and to the Pacific. Fate of Shook & Palmer, once leaders of theatricals in New York.

THE new season<sup>1</sup> opened with another failure, "Quits," from the German, in which everybody appeared, and Miss Laura Joyce, a wholesome and handsome English girl, was seen for the first time at Daly's. The fate of the play was prognosticated by the favor it received from the company when read to them in the Green Room. My brother wrote to me: "It went with screams. They say that is a bad sign." The disappointment came after a very suc-

<sup>1</sup> 1881-1882.

cessful summer revival of "Cinderella at School," and notwithstanding an excellent performance by W. J. Lemoyne, also a newcomer, whose acting with Lewis was in the vein of true comedy. Further additions to the company were Henry M. Pitt, George Vanderhoff, Jr., Miss Helen Tracy, and Miss Marie Williams. There was a notable change of policy this season — the plan of a musical company in addition to a dramatic force was abandoned. It had not succeeded, and it was not resumed for a dozen years. "Quits" was played four weeks, and while it was on, a series of Wednesday matinées introduced to the public a new face — Miss Agnes Leonard, who appeared first in "Raven's Daughter," adapted expressly for her from the German of Dr. A. Wilbrandt, and afterwards in "Frou-Frou."

"Americans Abroad" by Edgar Fawcett was put on next, but after seventeen representations the manager withdrew it and hurled his forces at its successor. This was "The Youth of Louis XIV"<sup>1</sup> from the well-known comedy of Dumas père. Mrs. Gilbert was *Anne of Austria*, Leclercq *Mazarin*, Digby Bell *Molière*, Drew *Louis XIV*, Miss Rehan *Marie de Mancini*, Miss Joyce *Georgette*, Miss Brooks *Le Duc d'Anjou*, Miss Everson *Charlotte*, Miss Bancroft *Mdlle. de la Motte*, Emily Denin *Charles II*, Miss Fielding *Princess Henrietta*, Vanderhoff *de Guiche*, and Lemoyne *Danjeau*. The story was of vital historical interest to Parisians, but excited little in New York, and all the managerial care to be archæologically correct, the gorgeous palaces, the splendid costumes, the forest of Fontainebleau, the orangery, the hunt, and the brilliant array of courtiers were wasted. This was the third successive defeat of the season. The next play made a hit.

<sup>1</sup> Produced October 22, 1881.

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"The Passing Regiment" <sup>1</sup> was a Daly version of Moser and von Schönthan's "Krieg im Frieden" (War in Peace). The incident of a regiment billeted upon a rural town was neatly transferred to America. Drew, as *Lieutenant Paul Dexter*, and Miss Rehan, as the Russian ingénue, *Telka Essoff*, were brilliant in true comedy rôles. While this lively piece was on its successful way, the manager was busy with the rehearsals of a remarkable production.

"Odette," Sardou's latest Parisian sensation, was no sooner underlined than theatrical and critical circles wondered what new actress of rare gifts was to be engaged for the exacting and sympathetic rôle of the heroine, whose tragic story was so widely discussed when the brilliant master of stage art presented his creation to France. When this part, which demanded feeling, power, and passion — governed by reserve — was given to Miss Rehan, there was, after the first pause, a realization that Mr. Daly's judgment was not at fault. It was true that she had never before essayed so weighty a task, and that her successes had been in comedy, but already a well-known English critic, Joseph Hatton, in his "America To-day," written after one of his visits to New York, had coupled her with Clara Morris and declared them to be "two of the most remarkable actresses now on the boards," and had added that Miss Rehan excelled in "true natural comedy."

The part of *Berangère* reintroduced Hélène Stoepel (Bijou Heron) to America. She was now a fresh and charming girl who had had since her childhood but one season's theatrical experience, an English tour with Boucicault. Her father, now musical conductor with his "old friend Daly," brought her with him from abroad. He had written :

<sup>1</sup> Produced November 10, 1881.



"She has, I find, many of her mother's ways and attitudes on the stage. It must however be so by nature, considering that she had no chance herself to see her mother act."

The cast included Pitt as the *Count*, Henry Miller, Drew, Vanderhoff, Lewis, Leclercq, Parkes, Moore, Sterling, Roberts, Bedell, Mrs. Gilbert, and Misses Fielding, Howard, Vincent, Everson, Denin, Hapgood, Hinckley, and Perring. Pitt's illness immediately after the *première* required a change of cast, and young Miller was, notwithstanding his youth, given the *Count*, and acquitted himself with dignity and discretion. The drama was played seventy-seven times.

The final production of the season was "La Girouette" by A. Coedes, Hennery, and Bocage, adapted by Fred Williams and Stoepel, introducing a charming young singer, Miss Francesca Guthrie, and a capital eccentric actor, William Gilbert, who became a fixture at Daly's.

Among the applicants this season for engagements were Lillian Russell, then at Tony Pastor's and making an impression, and Mr. William Collier, who was brought to Mr. Daly's notice by his stepfather :

Augustin Daly, Esq.

"City, July 5th, 1882.

Dear Sir,

I take the liberty of penning you these few lines to ask if you have a vacancy in any department — as I would like to place my step-son before I go to my engagement. Call-Boy, office, usher or anything. He is eighteen years of age, a good penman and correct at figures. Why I would like to get him in a theatre is — he is not strong and cannot do very heavy work. If you have any such opening and will give him consideration you will confer a favor on

Yours truly

Edmund Collier.

166 West 4th St., City."

New plays were offered by W. F. G. Shanks, — a well-known journalist, who rewrote a short piece, "A Prince of Good Fellows," which he said had been played as early as 1857, — by Bartley Campbell ("Mother and Daughter"), and by John A. Stevens ("Passion's Slave"). A literary curiosity was the dramatic attempt of Mr. Henry Morrison, a well-known New York lawyer. Very interesting is the following communication from the mother of Charles Stewart Parnell:

"May 15, 1882.

To Augustin Daly, Esq.

Dear Sir,

I am extremely desirous of having the pleasure of making your acquaintance and of speaking to you concerning a musical drama I wish to produce, if agreeable, in whatever way is most desirable. I shall be extremely obliged to you if you will, when convenient, be so good as to name a time at which I may be able to see you. I go to my country place today by the 7 p.m. train. My address is Ironside, Bordentown, New Jersey. Believe me to be, dear sir, truly yours,

Delia T. S. Parnell.

The play is not political, it is musical chiefly — dramatic, pathetic, and comic — with a continuous plot — and contains dances."

There was the customary tour of the Daly company, east and west. When it got to St. Louis, it played in "Uhrig's Cave," a sort of *al fresco* resort and open-air theatre. Augustin wrote concerning it and the St. Louis of 1882:

"If you can imagine the Punch & Judy stand on a large scale you have an idea of this theatre, where only the stage is under roof, where even the orchestra plays under the open sky, and where the entire audience sit on a pebbly sward and under the greenwood tree. It is quite a common occurrence for an iras-

cible auditor to come back with his coupon and complain that his seat is behind a big tree. Dorney says it's the old story, 'That post is in my way.' He thinks if there were a theatre up in the sky some grunter would come up and complain of his seat being behind one of 'them stars.'

We have showers here on the slightest provocation. And on each shower the streets actually ooze mud. And such slimy, villainous mud. It is not new and wholesome mud such as you would expect from such a comparatively new city as St. Louis, but that spongy exudation such as you come across in the old, old towns of the old world, coming up out of the old, old cobble stones which have received and smothered the rains and the drippings and the filth of ages. But then St. Louis is a sort of old young City. It is youthful in years but it is full of wrinkled little lanes and byways such as you only look for in the old, old towns. The houses have a blackened and aged and tumbled-away look — that is, those in the heart of the City, and the atmosphere half the time is dark and heavy, smoky and smutty. The Mississippi too, which cuts the town into an East St. Louis and St. Louis proper is a Tiberish sort of stream just here, full of eddies, yellow and thick with mud and drift, old tree roots, and the floating curiosities which fall into its bosom from its hundreds of miles of bank and levee. Strange mysteries it holds, and sometimes gives up. Hardly a day passes (not one since I've been here) that one or two dead bodies are not brought in by the colony of Rogue Riderhoods who gain a livelihood about here. Three days ago one of them brought ashore the body of a pretty young girl who had been missing a fortnight. She was only 14. She had come here with her sister from Denver. They were visiting friends. A party was to be given in their honor one evening, and she went out to make a call and post a letter before the guests came. She was never seen alive again. It has become one of the police cases of note, and is known as the Zoe Watkins Mystery. The bodies of two men were dragged in yesterday. One had been six months in the water, the other a few weeks. It is a queer town and the river is a strange old stream. I

wish you could roam over some of these odd places with me. How we would plan romances out of our walks! Think of such a title—The Mysteries of the Mississippi! Where would Lippard or Reynolds or Sue be?"

This is a very dark picture, and it is only just to say that it is the view of a manager who lost sixteen hundred dollars in two weeks there. For the benefit of those unacquainted with our early native novelists, it may be mentioned that George Lippard was a writer of thrilling tales in the middle of the nineteenth century, and is now less known than Charles Brockden Brown. Reynolds was the author of "The Mysteries of the Court of London," and a favorite with London apprentices, but hardly to be classed with the author of "The Mysteries of Paris."

In Chicago Daly took great interest in a benefit planned for Daniel D. Emmet, "the father of negro minstrelsy," so called, as he organized the first black-face minstrel band. He was the author of the words and music of *Dixie*, and now, at seventy years, was compelled to earn his living with his violin in a Chicago dive, as Augustin was informed by Dr. G. A. Kane.

This, from the *New York Dramatic News*, may be quoted from among the tributes of the year 1882:

"The theatrical profession of America owes to Mr. Daly more than to any man living. The Wallacks and the Palmers are insignificant beside him, for Mr. Daly was not a mere producer. He was a creator. It was not a year after Mr. Daly opened his first Fifth Avenue Theatre that every manager in America found out he had to change his manner of doing things. . . . With the production of *Frou-Frou* began a new era for the American stage. Then came his own plays—*Horizon*, the best of them all, *Man and Wife*, *Divorce*, *Pique*, and numberless others which enrich not alone himself but all the theatres of the country, and this was long after *Leah* and *Under*

the Gaslight, which, in their day, also made fortunes for those who handled them. Mr. Daly turned out one star after another. . . . Agnes Ethel, Clara Morris, Fanny Davenport, Kate Claxton were all names that he made famous. When the Union Square theatre came into existence it had to depend for existence upon what the Fifth Avenue Theatre had made. Daly was the creator — Palmer the imitator. We say this in no derogatory spirit to Mr. Palmer, we only state a fact that no one can ignore. With Mr. Daly's financial ups and downs we have nothing to do. But he might have been a very rich man had not his whole energy and whole being been devoted to his art. He made money to spend it, not to hoard it. . . . Men with vim and nerve like Augustin Daly must always survive misfortune that would crush the average man."

In the summer recess Augustin bestowed much money on redecorating his theatre. He wrote to me in August, 1882 :

"Everyone thinks it is loveliness. The Company assembled to-day 'on call' looking very sunburnt and very hearty. I am ready and eager now for the German comedy, for I have another stunning French play."

Repeating the policy of a preliminary season with the success of the preceding one, "The Passing Regiment" was put on; but it was followed on September 5 by the melodrama "Mankind." My brother loved a good melodrama — one of those pictures in which there is no subtlety, only striking figures, lurid lights, gloomy abysses of shadow, and virtue on the rack; with malignant villainy, hypocrisy, and greed working their will until caught in the mill of the gods and satisfactorily demolished. Such was "Mankind," by Paul Merritt and George Conquest, which came to Augustin from Conquest's own "Grecian Theatre" in London. It was a pure London type, with supposedly

English scenes, characters, and villains; and it must be a lively imagination that can conceive more depraved and entertaining villains than those of London melodrama. The chief miscreant in this play was *Goodge*, a money-lender, aged 101, who strangles his old associate *Sharpley*, a stripling of 73, with a silk pocket-handkerchief. The principal occupation of the characters, good and bad, consists in endeavoring to get possession of a will; that document is stolen by A, recovered by B, cribbed by C, and rescued by D in a wild scramble on the Thames embankment. The piece introduced several new members of the company: Mr. Yorke Stephens, Miss Helen Layton, Miss Florence Elmore, Miss Hattie Russell, and finally Master Collier (regularly employed as call-boy, but exercising his talents in small parts) who was described in the cast of characters as "*Albert Fitzallen*, age 11 — occupation, managing clerk — place of abode, 4th floor back, Bermondsey — disposition, Meek."

As the play did not require Miss Rehan, Mrs. Gilbert, Mr. Drew, or Mr. Lewis, its startling pictures of the human race did not attract very great audiences; nevertheless it was given forty times. Then came Pinero's "*The Squire*," a work destined to win a distinguished place in the annals of the theatre. The readers of Hardy's "*Far from the Madding Crowd*" recognized its plot in the story of *Kate Verity*, the Squire and mistress of the farm. The part of *Kate Verity* fell naturally to Miss Rehan, who gave as convincing a picture of the strong, self-contained, but loving and tender Englishwoman as she had given in "*Odette*" of the vivid Frenchwoman. The charm of this new impersonation was enhanced by the delicate shade of melancholy that pervaded its most hopeful scenes. Miss Virginia Dreher, a beautiful Southern woman, who had been recommended to Mr. Daly by the Western manager

John W. Norton, now appeared as the gypsy girl *Chrystie Haggerstone*, playing the part with a spirit and fire that were instantly remarked as indicative of great promise. Charles Fisher, a patriarchal figure as *Parson Dormer*, might be said to have been reserved through a long stage career to personify "the mad parson." The surprise of the performance, however, was Lewis' *Gunnion*, the hardened old shepherd.

The play was followed by a German comedy. "Our English Friend" was the name given by the adapter to "Reif von Reiflingen," intended by Moser as a sequel to his "Krieg im Frieden" — "The Passing Regiment." The play was without a plot, but by this time the audiences at Daly's were not particular as to plot, if only they were allowed to witness Miss Rehan, Mr. Drew, Mrs. Gilbert, Mr. Lewis, and the other members of the company in new and entertaining situations.

In "Our English Friend" Lewis was cast for *Digby de Rigby*, and for the first time was afraid of his part, which he thought was to be played in the "heavy swell" manner. He was particularly gloomy about certain love scenes. He complained to the manager: "I can't do it that way!" to which Daly replied, "Do it your own way." Lewis followed the suggestion with happy results. While he was thus troubled, Drew was surprised to find that the principal part was not to be given to him, and he made a temperate appeal to the manager. He was assured that the part of *Rigby* was not light comedy, but eccentric. Drew with the utmost good nature accepted the rôle of *Spencer*, and went through it to the delight of the audiences during the long run of the piece. Lewis' gloomy view of his part and of